

# China

## Reconstructs

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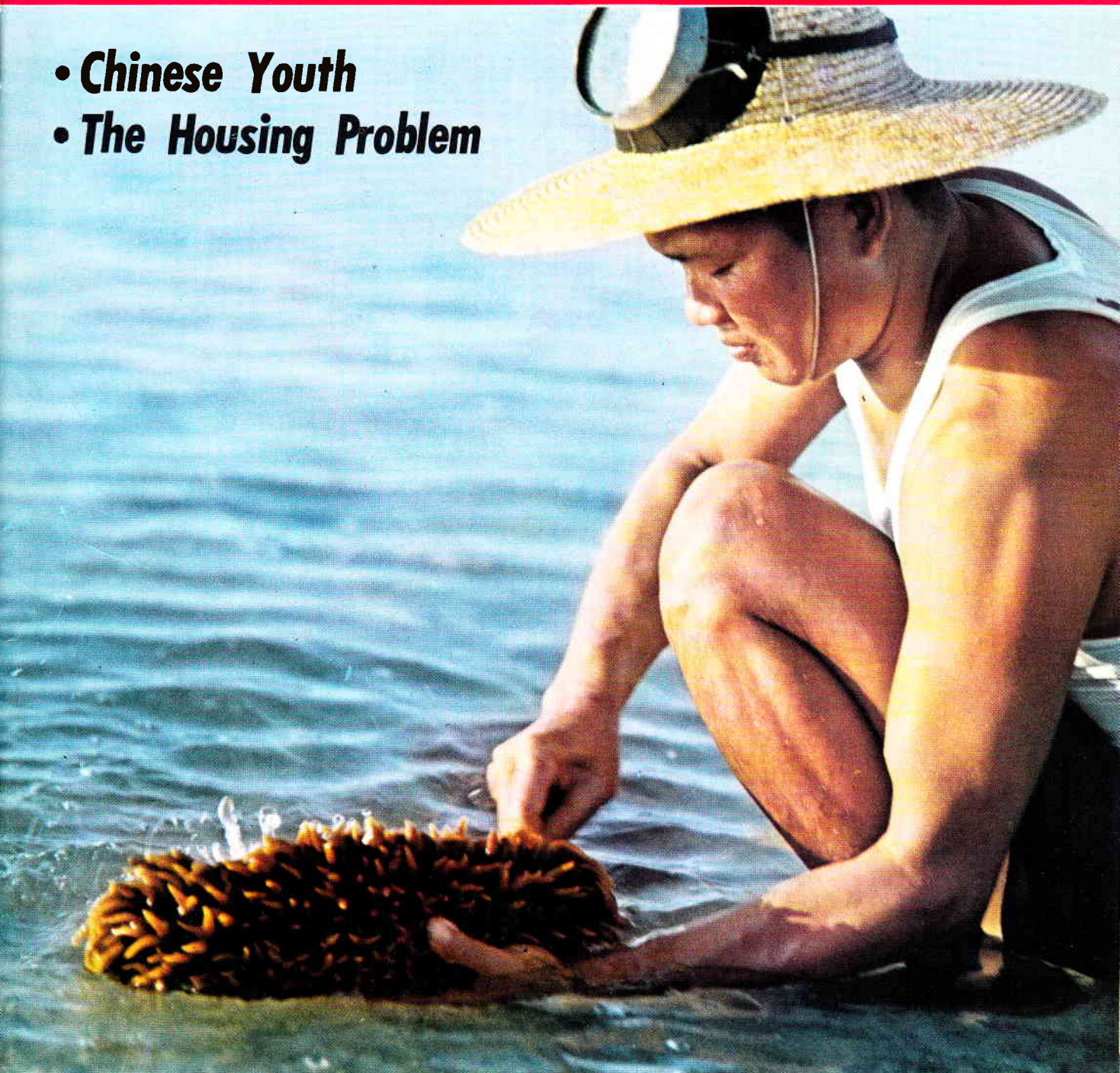
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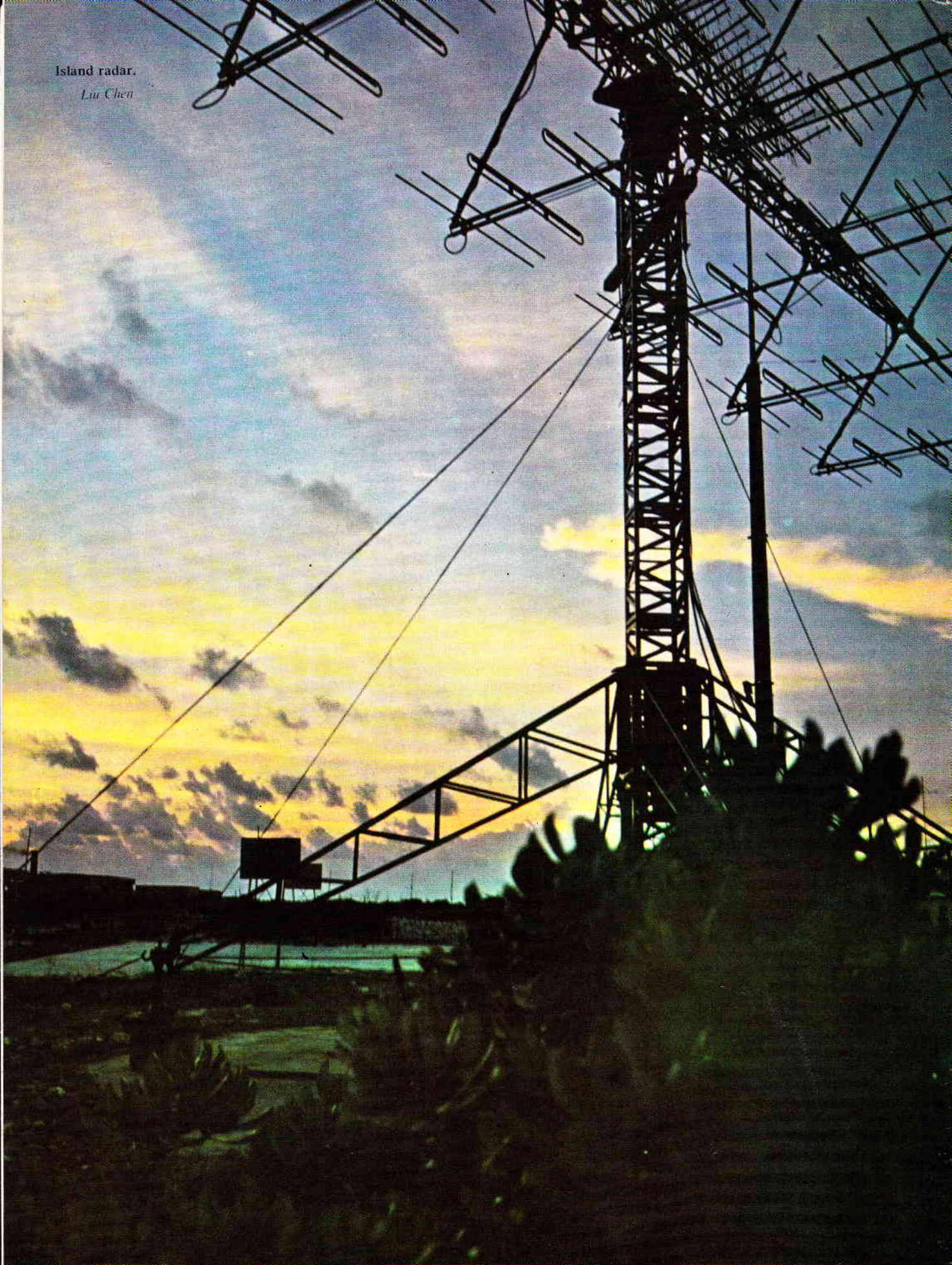
- **Chinese Youth**
- **The Housing Problem**



• **Tour of the Xisha Islands.**

Island radar.

*Liu Chen*



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Rare species of sea cucumber peculiar to the Xisha Islands *Liu Chen*

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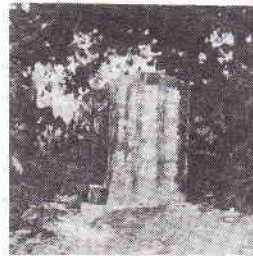


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# Chinese Youth Today

ZHONG PEIZHANG

Young geological surveyors.

Tian Ping





A youth loading team on the Shanghai docks commended as an advanced collective.

Xinhua

**W**HAT about Chinese youth in the present era? In the 1950s China's young people were characterized by revolutionary enthusiasm, dedication and discipline; and in the cultural revolution of the 60s by the Red Guard "spirit of rebellion." Where are today's youth headed for? Are they, as some say, a generation whom experience has taught to think for themselves? Or are they, as others call them, the "wounded," or even the "lost" generation? Are they typified by the few that strike one on big city streets by their avid copying of western styles of bell-bottom trousers and imported sun glasses? Or by the juvenile delinquents whose stories appear in the press from time to time? Such questions are asked by people both at home and abroad.

China's young people today display many tendencies. They are quite different from the youth of the 50s, or of the Red Guard movement. The years since 1976, covering the downfall of the gang of four and the discarding of their extreme policies, are for China a historical turning point, in which it is not surprising that there

should be great diversity among the youth. Nevertheless, a main tendency can be discerned.

It first surfaced in the popular demonstrations at Tian An Men Square on April 5, 1976 to commemorate the late Premier Zhou Enlai. These demonstrations were really a show of strength against the gang of four, who had grabbed a lot of power in the Communist Party and government.\* A great many of the demonstrators were young people. Their revolutionary action marked the beginning of the end for the gang, whose downfall came the following October.

Since 1976 there has been a steady process of re-evaluation of the ideas promoted over several years by the gang and by Lin Biao before them, and China's young people have shared in it. For them the results have been:

- Seeing through the blind cultism, demagogic words and distorted ideas about socialism promoted by the gang, and embarking on a search for the truth and ways to develop socialist democracy and to modernize the country.

- Repudiating the idea of looking down on education and ten-

dencies to rowdiness, the results of the atmosphere created by the gang of four, and re-establishing a willingness to study hard to master modern science.

- Young workers have become an important force in many work units as the veterans reach retirement age. Last year 7 million of them were placed in jobs. They are doing their share in making up for damage to the national economy during the decade of 1966-76.

- Attitudes of serving the people, helping others and being polite and disciplined are again recommended behavior, even if still not universally complied with.

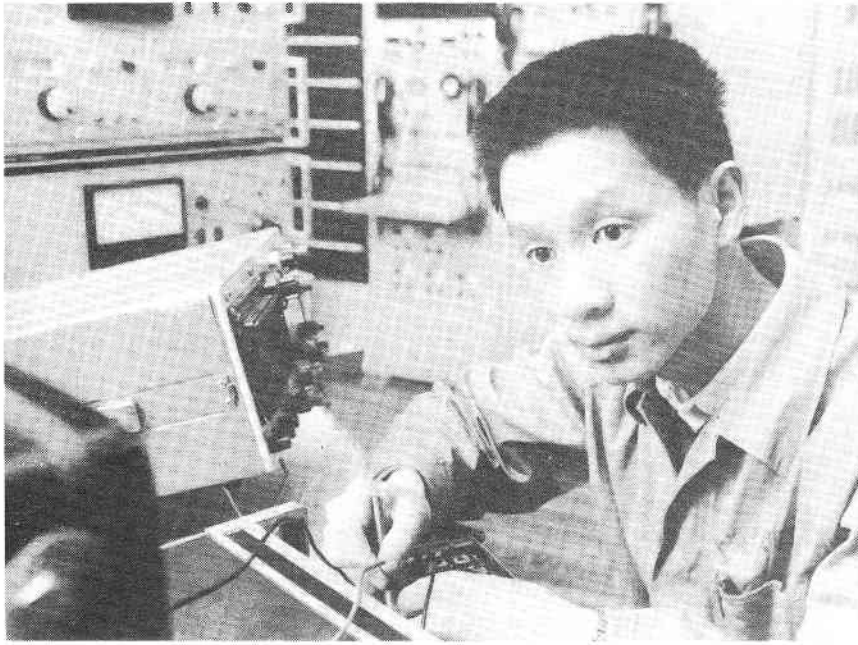
These strands comprise the main tendency among Chinese youth, despite any others present. They reflect their strong desire to create the democracy and advanced culture one expects in a socialist society. This is the way today's youth can continue the cause of their predecessors.

### The 'Advancing Generation'

Today's youth are deeply influenced by what happened in the 10 years of turmoil during the cultural revolution. In promoting their ideas, Lin Biao and the gang of four misused the political enthusiasm of the young people of that time, the elder brothers and

ZHONG PEIZHANG is a vice-director of the newspaper Chinese Youth and in charge of research for the Communist Youth League.

\* See the article "The Tian An Men Incident in 1976 — A People's Revolutionary Movement" in China Reconstructs in February 1979.



Zhao Le, 25-year-old assistant technician in Shanghai Telecommunication Marine Cable Bureau, one of the many young people who are becoming the technical mainstay as veterans retire. *Xinhua*

They are sensitive to new things, not content with things as they are; they want change. They are dead set against the kind of cultural autocracy and restrictive policies pursued under the gang of four; they feel they are entitled to a better life, both materially and culturally. They are eager to learn, and want to know about the world outside and build contacts and friendship with the people of other countries.

Today's youth are the most enthusiastic force for social advance. Actively supporting the Chinese Communist Party's present policies, they are willing to work hard and explore the unknown in the cause of modernization. They are willing to break through the trammels of conventional ideas.

At the same time there are some who raise questions like:

sisters of today's youth, or in some cases of these same young people. Thousands of politically enthusiastic youngsters were duped by them, and this collective experience has left a deep scar.

The policies pursued by the gang left this whole age group ill-educated and closed off from important knowledge about the world. They are keenly aware of the wide gap between their preparation and the tasks they must face. China's low-level economy, still undergoing readjustment, can provide no quick solutions for many problems affecting their lives — college enrolment, employment, marriage, housing and a richer cultural life. Greater contact with things abroad is giving today's youth broader vistas, but has made even more apparent to them the gap between China and the economically-developed countries. This is a factor for greater maturity, but also creates a more complex psychology. They are politically-minded and look forward to China's modernization, and they are realistic in that they will not tolerate empty sloganeering. They want to seek the truth and think independently and will not be talked into accepting anything easily or blindly.

Since graduation from Jiangsu Agricultural College in 1978 Qiu Taiping (right) from Yangzhou in southeast China has been working on improving the breed of sheep in Tibet. *Shu Ye*



Which is better, socialism or capitalism? Wherein does the superiority of socialism lie? Such questions are in reality a repudiation of the empty socialist rhetoric of Lin Biao and the gang of four and show that today's youth sincerely desire genuinely scientific solutions under socialism.

At the top level, China's leaders are analyzing the experience and lessons of the past thirty years of socialist construction in China, in order to develop guidelines for modernization in China's own way. In essence this process is going on at the grass roots too, and the questions of the young people reflect this. At any historic turning point it is inevitable that some people should be confused, but as a whole it is correct to describe the present youth as an advancing generation.

### Dealing with Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency in China has in recent years been higher than in the 50s and early 60s, giving cause for concern. Yet the rate in China is still much lower than in capitalist countries.

In China, juvenile crime is not a consequence of the social system but a legacy of the ten years of countrywide turmoil. It will require both ideological education and solution to problems of school enrolment, employment and better recreational facilities. In the past two years great efforts have been made to save young offenders. In many neighborhoods helping hands have been stretched out to them through "help and education" groups involving the Communist Party and Youth League organizations, schools, parents, the police, retired workers and local housewives. As a result of their efforts, a good many petty thieves and young hoodlums have turned over a new leaf. Some have even become model workers or joined the Communist Youth League. Such results illustrate the superiority of relations between people under socialism.

### Discussions Show Morality

Two widespread discussions this spring give some insight into the mood of Chinese youth today. Jiang Xue, a young man from Shanghai wrote to the newspaper *Chinese Youth* saying that he had found he had an illness which had left him incurably paralyzed. He felt that because of it he should break with the young woman he had been going with for the past four years. He couldn't decide what to do, and wanted to know what the editors thought. Published, the letter provoked a lot of comment and brought letters from over 6,000 readers in two weeks. Some expressed concern for Jiang Xue's health and happiness and urged him to have the confidence to fight his illness. Some sent him medicines or recommended doctors who had had good results treating paralysis. Some rural readers sent packages of peanuts and dates.

On the crucial question, quite a few praised his noble spirit, but the majority said that though he meant well, they thought he was underestimating his sweetheart. Many young women wrote that a girl who really loved him would not give him up. Some people advised him to maintain the relationship a little longer in the hope a cure might be found, but in the end to break it off if it proved incurable.

One thing almost all the writers agreed on was the praiseworthiness of the personal love between Jiang Xue and his fiancée. Such human feelings had been sneered at for a whole decade when ultra-left ideas dominated.

Another letter, in the May issue of *Chinese Youth Journal*, was from Pan Xiao, a young woman of 23. Hardships to her family during the cultural revolution, retaliation from a factory head she had criticized, lack of opportunity for further schooling and a broken love affair had led her to conclude that things were not as she had been taught. Everybody, she now felt, was essentially out for self and there was no such a thing as



Yang Nunye (left) has been praised in the press for her decision to marry Xue Xianzheng who became disabled as a result of injuries while defending China's border with Vietnam. *Xinhua*

selflessness: no matter what people did, even in their everyday work, though they maybe be objectively working for the common good, they were really only out for themselves. Yet, she was unwilling to accept this, and wanted to know why things seemed to be getting more and more hopeless.

Such spiritual scars are those borne by many of her generation. Yet, within three weeks the magazine received more than 20,000 letters in response to hers. Only a very few either totally agreed or disagreed with her. About 95 percent of the writers said that they could understand or share her feeling, but did not agree that life was becoming more hopeless, and hoped that she would get over her low mood.

The discussion of her letter shows that today's youth are re-examining the meaning of life, the worth of the individual and the tasks of society in preparation for assuming their own historical role. □

# Young People Tell Personal Plans

— A Poll at the Shanghai Shipyard

JIN GONG

WHAT is your personal plan for the next ten years?" was the question put to young workers at the Shanghai Shipyard this spring.

The shipyard has 3,000 young people. Of the 292 approached—including 3 Party members and 226 League members—one third were women. Each was asked to give three answers anonymously. In all, 650 replies were received.

The largest category, numbering 174, showed the respondents wanted to learn more and raise their abilities. Among them, 107 planned to reach the level of senior middle school or college graduates through study at night schools; 9 aspired to be creators and inventors in science and technology; 43 wanted to learn one or two foreign languages. To broaden their cultural horizons, 13 of the workers planned extensive reading of well-known Chinese and foreign works of literature. Two were interested in deepening their thought processes, learning something about logic and psychology, and exploring man's inner world.

Concern for material welfare was shown in roughly 100 answers; 58 people wanted a pay-raise soon; 31 to get a comfortable flat; 28 to buy a set of modern furniture; 18 to save some money.

Such desires, as dressing attractively or sampling famous wines, teas and other delicacies—once ridiculed as a sign of vulgar and 'individualistic' inclinations—were no longer considered indecent or shameful and so were reflected in some answers.

Revealed was a variety of interests as regards spare-time activity and recreation. Fifty-four workers hoped to learn skills such as tailoring, knitting or TV assembly; 30 wished to go in for arts such as music, calligraphy or photography; 76 to tour China and visit scenic spots; 21 to go on a trip abroad; 13 to learn dancing, skating or swimming; 21 to improve their physiques, some pledging to stop smoking; 6 wanted to develop their hobby, stamp collecting; 9 to keep diaries.

As regards politics, 48 workers hoped to qualify for the Party or the Communist Youth League.

Occupationally, 45 wanted to find work more in line with their interests. Personally, 18 young people answered that they wanted to find an ideal spouse and have a happy family life. Some hoped to find a bosom friend.

A few aspired to fly to the moon on a spaceship.

BESIDES filling in the questionnaire, some wrote more explicitly what kind of people they wanted to be. One young man said, "I hope to become a person who knows both how to work and to enjoy himself, has good morals and good manners and does his share for the country and society." Other such statements were, "I do not want to dilly-dally through life." "I am determined to spend more time in study." "I want to contribute more to the people and nation."

Were there young folk who did not hope for anything at all? Yes. One wrote frankly, "I don't have any plans. I just want to drift along."

The results of the survey aroused widespread attention and

Young workers can upgrade themselves through study as in this shipyard class in electrical engineering.







Shen Longcai (center) of the hull shop, the innovator.

interest. The newspaper *Chinese Youth* commented on them under the heading "May your dreams come true!", saying that with the exception of a few, most of the desires expressed by the young people were reasonable and legitimate.

Wherever practicable, the Shanghai Shipyard has taken measures to help the young people realize their wishes. It has organized 266 classes— evening, part-time or with full leave from work, from elementary to senior high school level—for technical and cultural subjects. As a re-

sult 60 percent of the young workers have reached junior high school level, an increase of 25 percent over 1979. More and more are going to senior high school classes. This year over 1,000 have been given the chance to participate in rotation in technical training courses with leave from work. The most hardworking and successful get early promotions in work.

To help improve living conditions, construction of new housing has been put high on the list. In the ten years from 1966-1976 the shipyard's investment in new housing was only 640,000 yuan

with 8,600 sq. meters of floor space built. But in the last three years, the investment was 2,550,000 yuan, enough for 25,000 sq. meters. Many newlyweds got new apartments in June when 10,000 sq. meters of new housing were assigned; more will move when the 12,000 sq. meters planned for this year are completed. In spring, the factory organized a touring group for those who wanted to sightsee. Six hundred workers, mostly young people, visited nearby famous scenic cities like Suzhou, Hangzhou, Wuxi and Yixing.

**T**HE measures taken at the Shanghai Shipyard are broadly representative of the situation in many places in China. Nationwide, 280,000 young people are studying in classes given by the Central Broadcasting and Television University. Students attending classes in factory-run colleges and spare-time colleges amount to 580,000. Housing (including hostels) built last year covered a floor space of 60 million sq. meters, 66 percent more than in 1978. Many young people who are conscientious in their work, technically skilled and making good contributions have been given promotions and pay raises. Some have been sent abroad for further study or training after qualifying in examinations. □

There is a great motivation to study.



Shanghai Shipyard has a swimming-pool, but better recreational facilities are high on the list of demands of young people everywhere.

Photos by Zhong Xiangdong



# Reform of a Young Delinquent

YOU YUWEN



Fang Wenxing on the job at the Tianjin Steel Cable Plant.

AS the train approached at high speed, a young man in his twenties threw himself across the tracks. Another young man standing nearby pushed him aside just before the train roared past. Attempted suicide at such an early age? No, merely a show of bravado by the first young man, whose name was Fang Wenxing to impress his gang. He had built it up and become its leader by being the most daring, the toughest. Once he had grasped a red hot poker without uttering a cry. The gang's code was that of the ancient "brotherhoods" of China's feudal outlaws — absolute loyalty to each other to the point of death.

That was what Fang Wenxing was like in 1971. A hoodlum notorious throughout the city of Tianjin, he had a record of some 200 street fights (sometimes five or six a day) in seven of the city's eight districts, and 60 arrests. To show their disrespect for authority his gang took to snatching caps off people's heads and he had been caught at it 170 times. He had served two terms in education-through-labor camp for a total of four years.

Fang's family background was good. His father had joined the revolution as a boy and had been

wounded in the War of Liberation. His mother worked in a government office. In primary school he had been a good student and leader of his Young Pioneer group. But a negative thing was that like some other children of cadres, and particularly as the only son born to fairly old parents he had been indulged too much at home.

How did he go bad? Young Fang himself, now a worker at a steel cable plant, explains it this way:

"During the cultural revolution we stopped attending classes. Social order was shattered. The students lined up in factions which brawled with each other. Whoever was tough and beat up more people was regarded as a hero, so I began doing it myself. The first time I beat somebody up, with a dummy hand grenade, I was worried that I would be punished. But at the same time I thought my parents would cover up for me. In fact, nobody did anything to stop me. On the contrary, the boys respected and feared me all the more.

"When I was in middle school the gang of four, through the newspapers and other media they controlled, made a big hero of a character named Zhang Tiesheng who turned in a blank examination paper, claiming he was defying the old school system. If that made him a hero and helped him

to rise to various posts, what reason was there for us to study or behave? From then on I became one of the chief troublemakers in class, throwing chalk at the teacher, singing rowdy songs, getting into knife fights. When I was expelled from school I thought that was just fine because now nobody could stop me from doing what I wanted."

Neither his father's nor his mother's pleading could make him change. Once when young Fang was taken to a hospital with an injury from a fight, his mother, driven to the brink of insanity by worry, begged the doctor to give him an injection that would end his life.

## He Called Him Comrade

After Fang was released from his second spell of labor education in 1979 he got work as a bricklayer at Steel Cable Plant No. 2 in Tianjin. Within 20 days he had a record of four new fights.

One day he overheard someone saying that he wasn't going to be kept at his job long. Though this was in fact untrue, he flew into a rage. Without permission he left a rush job he was doing repairing a boiler and charged into a meeting being held to educate new workers in revolutionary ideals. There he was confronted by 25-year-old Bian Fenggang, a

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YOU YUWEN is a staff reporter for China Reconstructs.

deputy secretary of the plant's Communist Youth League branch.

"All right, you'll have your chance to say whatever you want to. Let's go somewhere and talk this over," said Bian, beginning to lead him toward the plant's security office. Fang punched Bian in the face and broke two of his teeth.

Bian remained calm, which infuriated Fang all the more because he felt Bian was doing it to deliberately embarrass him in public. He picked up a stone and was about to heave it at Bian's head when some one stopped him.

"I'll kill you . . ." were Fang's parting words to Bian.

That evening he gathered eight young men in his room. They were about to go to the plant to find Bian when, somebody knocked at the door. In came Bian himself.

Holding a kitchen knife to Bian's head, Fang aimed the sharpened end of a 7-inch scraper against Bian's chest with his left hand. The others in the gang had guns, which they pointed at Bian. The scraper began to poke a hole in Bian's shirt.

"Comrade Xiao Fang, I've come here to talk with you. I want to help you."

Fang slowly let the scraper drop.

For the past eight years nobody had ever called him comrade. His gang called him "Elder Brother", but in the feudal manner that meant that he was boss. The police, his neighbors and even his mother just called him a hoodlum. Now here was Bian, whom he could not help respecting for being even more fearless than himself, talking to him as an equal and offering help — at such a moment. Young Fang, after all, had been brought up in the healthy socialist atmosphere of earlier years. There was something in him that responded, something deeper than his recent self.

Fang told his gang to leave and sat down to talk with Bian. The latter told him that both the Youth League and his co-workers wanted to help him. If he'd only change he, too, could have a bright future. They talked for over an

hour. When he left Bian gave Fang three new pamphlets written for young people on current ideological problems. Fang not only took them but picked up a hatchet and smashed the scraper into several pieces. The two shook hands.

The next day Fang asked to make a self-criticism at a meeting of the workers. When he was finished, Bian was the first to applaud and then many of the Youth League members came up to shake Fang's hand. In the previous eight years Fang had been up before many meetings to be criticized and denounced. This was the first time he had been applauded. He could not keep back the tears.

### Also a Victim

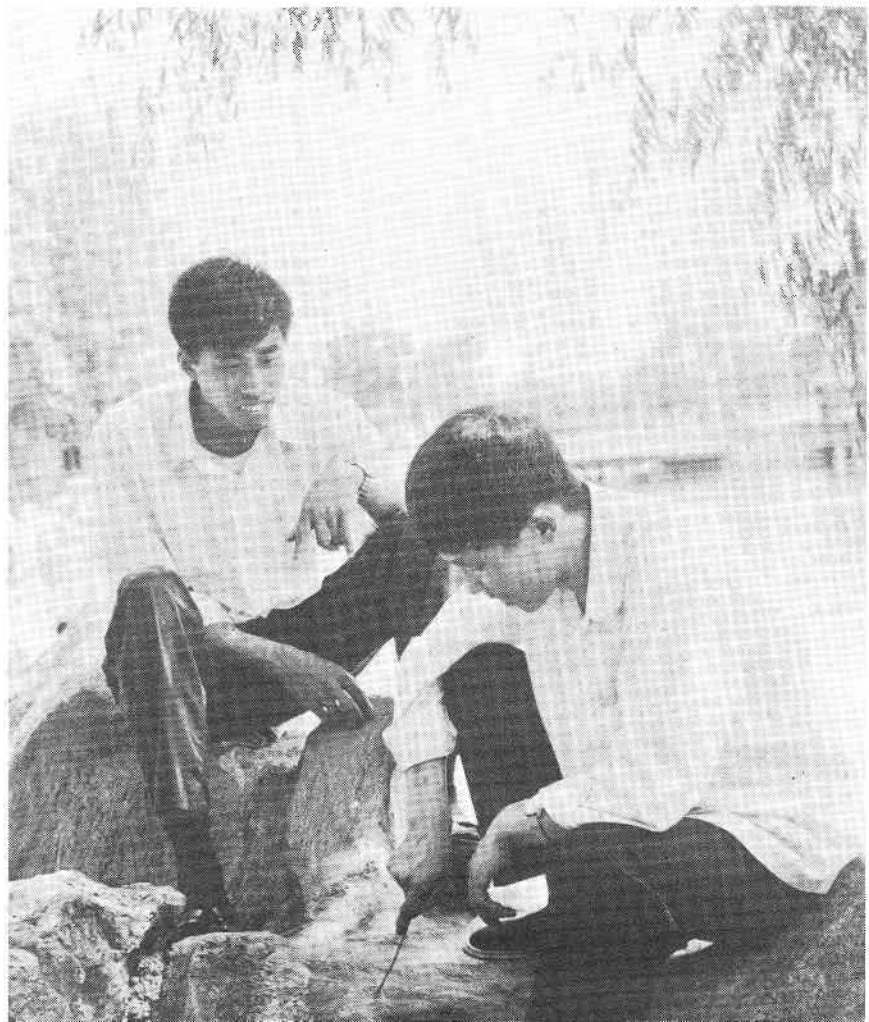
For a long time Bian had been pondering the question: How to

deal with young people who had been influenced by the encouragement to beat, smash and loot that came from the gang of four and their like during the cultural revolution? These young people, and the attitudes they took had become a real social problem.

Bian felt that the Youth League branch at the plant had stressed praising the advanced people and picking good examples, yet nobody had paid much attention to these others. The worst of it was that the League often prohibited them from joining even normal open social activities for young people. To get a fuller view of Fang's past record, Bian spent the next two weeks talking to Fang's family and to people at his school and at the education-through-labor camp to which he had been sent. "It's not he alone that's to blame for his crimes,"

Bian Fenggang (left) talks with Fang whom he helped to find the right road.

Photos by Ke Renqui



Bian began to think. "Yes, he harmed others and was a menace to society, but he was also a victim."

He concluded that Fang still had some good potential. For instance, his boldness and strong feelings. If only they could be turned into constructive channels. He also turned up a fact that really impressed him. One day Fang had come across an old peasant sitting beside the road crying and muttering. Asked what was the matter, the old man said he had just had 300 yuan stolen from him. It had most likely been lifted by one of the gang, Fang reasoned. Soon he found the youth and scolded him. "Don't you remember that we swore not to steal from workers and peasants?" Recovering the money, Fang returned it to the old man and helped him to the railway station.

### A Step Back

A few days after Fang's self-criticism the plant purchased a load of fish to be divided up among the workers. Bian had heard that Fang's mother was ill. Fang was away that day, so Bian asked the kitchen to cook up his own share and that of another branch secretary and sent them with Fang's share to Fang's house.

That night many things passed through Fang's mind. He thought of the harm he had done to society over the past eight years and the strain he had put on his mother. Tormented by such thoughts till he could stand it no longer, he rushed into his mother's room and threw himself into her arms, crying bitterly. "Ma! Ma! I've done so many bad things. I thought there was no hope for me. But Bian has been so good to me. I've made up my mind to turn over a new leaf."

Embracing him, his mother said, "You'll never understand how worried I've been. But if you can change, I'll die happy."

The first thing the next morning Fang looked up Bian to thank him. He said he wanted to be his

bosom friend. "I'll die for you if necessary."

"Let's cut out this brotherhood loyalty," Bian smiled. "We are friends . . . comrades. That's why we should help and show concern for one another."

Fang moved into the plant's single men's hostel and shared a room with Bian.

### The Last Blowup

The news of Fang's change spread on wings through the plant. He soon began to do extra work around the plant on his day off, and was the first to volunteer for the tedious and dirty jobs. When he learned that the mother of one of his co-workers was ill he mailed the family 30 yuan from his savings.

But it was not all smooth sailing. One day as Fang pushed a cartload of bricks under the scorching sun, he got into a row with Old Wang the gatekeeper because he had forgotten to bring his pass. It was a rush job and Fang thought the keeper, who knew him, should have let him through anyway.

"Don't you tell me what to do," the old man said. "Everybody knows what kind you are . . ." Fang flared up, "You old bum . . ." Another worker, thinking Fang had returned to his old ways, went up and punched him. Fang was about to strike back

when he thought of his talks with Bian. He put down his fist, but, overpowered by the feeling of being wronged, couldn't go on working and sat down disconsolately on the bridge near the plant. Bian hurried to the scene. He did not criticize Fang. He praised him for not losing his temper and urged him to finish the job.

Succeeding in his effort to do many good things, Fang began to show signs of conceit. Once when a shop needed painting, Fang volunteered to do it singlehandedly, which wasn't necessary. The Youth League branch decided its members would all work together on the job, and that Fang could work with them. This made Fang furious. "They still don't trust me," he thought.

Bian talked to him again and took some of the blame on himself, saying that his constant praise of Fang had contributed to the latter's new shortcoming. This impressed Fang and he went to join the painting. Recently Fang was cited as a pace-setter and model in economizing material at work for the whole city of Tianjin.

At first Bian had wanted Fang, as part of his progress, to break off all relations with his old gang. Then he found that Fang's change was having an influence on them too. They have committed no new crimes since. □



Smoking is suicide.  
Liu Yong



When will this be modernized?  
Wang Fuyang

### CARTOONS

# About Housing in China Today

FANG JINGGEN and CHEN RINONG

**I**N China's cities, new housing for 4 million families (56 million square meters) was built last year alone, a rate of construction unparalleled in the nation's history. As much or more new housing may be finished this year.

In the countryside, many millions of families have moved into new homes since the liberation, and most of others have had their homes renovated or rebuilt. Although rural housing is in general not as well built or equipped with facilities as that in the cities, the homes often have more space.

It is in the cities that living space has become a serious prob-

lem. A 1977 survey of 192 cities found an average of only 3.6 square meters per person. One-third of the families lived in conditions that are clearly crowded. Many young people were delaying marriage because of lack of a place to live.

There are two main reasons for this shortage, economists say. First, the rapid growth of China's urban population. In 1949 only 50 million people lived in cities and towns. By 1978 there were twice that number. So despite the very large number of new houses built, urban living space per person today is smaller than in the 50s.

Second, outlay for housing construction has been insufficient. In the 50s it accounted for 9.1 per-

cent of total spending for capital construction. Between the 60s and early 70s it accounted for only 4 to 7 percent. Construction of residences dwindled to almost nothing during the ten years of the height of influence of Lin Biao and the gang of four, who paid little regard to the needs of the people. After their fall, however, the proportion of capital construction funds put into housing climbed rapidly as follows: it was 6.9 percent in 1977, rose to 7.8 percent in 1978 and reached 10 percent in 1979. Much of this money is allocated to factories, schools and other places of work to build housing for their workers. They are also encouraged to do so with their own funds. In 1979 the latter type of expenditure reached 1,540 million yuan in the

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Planning urban construction for Beijing.



cities, and constituted a third of the total spent for urban housing construction in the whole country. This two-pronged approach has indeed provided more housing: 120 million square meters have been built in the last three years.

Furthermore, encouragement and help is given to workers and other city dwellers to build their own homes. Over 14,000 residents in Fuzhou, Fujian province, for instance, have done this. In addition, in Fuzhou and elsewhere, quite a few families and relatives of overseas Chinese have bought or built housing for themselves with remittances from abroad. Private ownership of houses is specifically protected in the Constitution.

Standard designs for houses and apartment buildings, recently made available, take into account suitability to local conditions, economy and looks. Most of the apartments have two bedrooms, a kitchen and toilet, and a floor space of 45 to 50 square meters. Five or six-story walkups are the most common. Some high-rise apartment buildings (10 stories or more) have been put up in a few of the big cities. So far Chinese architects can't agree on whether such construction is suitable for wide use.

### Improvement over Past

Building efficiency has been raised with new techniques and materials. Though quality is still low and facilities somewhat lacking, the housing picture is incomparably better than 30 years ago. In the past, the great majority of the working people lived in small rundown shacks, some even in low, damp mud huts or shelters made of straw mats. Rents were high and a heavy burden, particularly in a metropolis like Shanghai. In the countryside landless peasants were often forced to live in broken-down temples or literally didn't have a roof over their heads.

In the land reform in the late 40s and early 50s extra housing owned by the landlords was parceled out among the poor peasants. In the cities, during the

socialist transformation of 1956 many houses owned by big real-estate owners were bought by the government, so exploitation through high-rents was ended.

Reconstruction of slum areas began in the big cities soon after liberation. How this happened in a section of Beijing was vividly described in the play *Dragon-Beard Ditch* by the late well-known playwright Lao She. Construction of large-scale urban housing projects began after 1953. A total of 580 million square meters (accommodating some 40 million families), has been built in cities and industrial and mining areas since the liberation in 1949. In the rural areas, as a result of the development of production and raising of income after the collectivization of agriculture almost all the old housing has been either repaired or rebuilt, with brick houses gradually replacing those of mud bricks.

### Low Rents

Housing in the cities and towns is generally government-owned. Rents are low with slight variations according to space, quality and location, and they have remained the same throughout the years. In Beijing the charge is 0.16 yuan per square meter in an apartment building and 0.12 yuan in a one-story house. A young couple with a combined average income of 110 yuan per month will pay about 4.50 yuan, or four percent of their income for a two-room apartment of 25 square meters. Before liberation 20 to 30 percent of urban family earnings went for rent.

Some believe the present rents as too low: that they do not cover the cost of maintenance which is done at no charge to the tenants. This view was raised at a recent meeting of economists and authorities on rent policy. No conclusion was reached, but it was agreed that rents exceeding eight percent of the family income would be a burden to the tenant. This question is still being studied.

In the rural areas, some commune brigades have built low-

rent apartment buildings. But one-story farm cottages are still the majority. These are financed and owned by the families themselves.

### Getting An Apartment

How housing is allocated is a big question, complicated by the present acute shortage. People who want more room, or young couples getting married and wanting housing apply to their places of work. The request is considered by a committee composed of workers' representatives and one of the leaders. After each case has been carefully investigated, housing is assigned in the order of urgency. When many apartments are being allocated at the same time a tentative plan is posted for public comment. The final decision rests with the leaders of the place of work.

This method is generally fair and reasonable. But there have been cases where those in charge, or workplace leaders, have grabbed more than their share of space for themselves, relatives or friends or for someone who has bribed them. When found out, such offenders are severely criticized and sometimes punished.

What happens when a family increases, for instance when a child is born, or an elderly parent moves in? The tenant can apply for more room as described above. But if there is a reduction in family size, as when a child marries and leaves, the family is not asked to move to smaller quarters.

And in the event of changing jobs or retiring from work? In general the tenant can continue living in his old home if he or she wishes. Sometimes people wish to move closer to the new job. If the new workplace has no accommodation, they can register to swap apartments at housing exchange centers operated by the housing administration in large cities. These put people who wish to exchange apartments in touch with each other. If both parties agree, they can swap. Last year such centers helped 17,000 families in Beijing obtain housing more suited to their needs. □



Residential building under construction.

*Liu Chen and Xie Jun*

Signalling the crane operator,  
part of the Chinese city scene.

*Wang Hongxun*



Welding together prefabricated sections.

*Wang Hongxun*







An old residential area in Beijing.

## The 'Square Courtyard' of Old Beijing

RONG YEN

**T**HOUGH many new multi-storied apartments have been built in Beijing, "home" for a little more than half the population of the city proper consists of a few rooms in a traditional one-story "square courtyard" (siheyuan in Chinese). This consists of rows of rooms enclosing the four sides of a courtyard where an old tree or two usually provides shade, and flowers may be grown. For centuries, such has been the typical Beijing residence for a middle class household, comprising several generations. This form of housing, with entrance through the southern row, provides some shelter against the city's cold northwest winds. Traditionally, the row facing south toward the courtyard and thus most warmed by the sun, was where the head of the family and his wife lived. The rooms along the east and west sides were for the sons and daughters. The fourth row, with high windows toward the street and a sunless northern exposure was used for kitchen, storage and, in the old society, servants' quarters.

Now, instead of accommodating one household, such courtyards are shared by several families. I visited one in southwestern and

another in the northwestern Beijing. The first, at No. 23 Qijing Lane, was built many years ago as a private residence and is occupied by six families numbering among their working members an electrician, driver, bus conductor, policeman, teacher and office worker.

Behind the traditional red-painted double doors, a passageway led into the courtyard. This did not look very spacious because two of the families had built small lean-tos off the northern and southern rows of rooms to serve as their private kitchens. Yet pots of flowers and crocheted cotton curtains contributed a homey look. As it was daytime, everybody had gone to work or school except an old woman who was listening to the radio, a girl reading in her room, and a woman worker just ready to leave for shopping on her day off. She was Jian Lanhua, about 40 and when I told her what I had come for she made me welcome and showed me around the house.

### Jian Lanhua's Family

Her family of four had moved there seven years ago to be closer

to their jobs. They occupy one large room on the west which at Jian Lanhua's request was subdivided into two smaller ones, with a total of 22 square meters. A small window has been cut into the west wall. She and her husband sleep in one of the rooms which is about filled up by a double bed, wardrobe, several trunks and a sewing machine. The two daughters sleep in the other, which the family also uses for dining. On the cupboard stands a 12-inch black-and-white television. Her husband, an electrician, had built it himself.

Jian Lanhua told me that the couple's combined wage was not high, only 100 yuan, but rent was very low, only 2.46 yuan. "Of course two rooms are not very much for four people," she said, "but we're better off than some of the neighbors."

### The Housing Problem

Housing, or rather an insufficiency of it, is thus clearly a problem in Beijing. This is recognized by the city administration. Along with new construction, they are trying to make better use of existing living space. Soon after visiting Jian Lanhua's home, I talked to Zhu Baoqi, a 48-year-old mason who has been praised for such efforts as head of the Niuje Street Housing Office, in the district where the Zhou family lives. He said that most of the one-story buildings in his area had been renovated to make all rooms liveable. Extensions jutting out into the courtyards have been built on over 300 houses, increasing floor space for 400 families.

As for new residential districts, Beijing has built many of them in the past three years. In 1979 housing with 2.6 million square meters of floor space—an all-time high for one year—was completed, providing housing for 52,000 families. Ten of the new housing projects are rather large, including a complex of 29 apartment buildings of ten to 14 stories just south of Tian An Men Square, with accommodation for 9,000 families.

## Neighborhood Renewal

An interesting job of neighborhood renewal is going on in the Beiyangfang residential area northwest of the city. The one-story houses there had originally been military barracks during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), and after its fall became the dwellings of laborers moving to the city from other parts of the country. Beginning in 1949 the government spent tens of thousands of yuan annually to keep the old houses habitable. But they were still old and barrack like. Finally, in 1976, the city decided to pull them down and build new ones by stages. Till now 13 new apartment buildings have been put up, providing new homes for over 300 families.

The day I was there a truckload of furniture was being unloaded before Building 26. East of it, construction was still going on. To the west, some of the old one-story buildings were still being lived in, and quilts were sunning in the yards.

Among the new tenants in Building 26 was the family of Tian Xiulan, a 57-year-old retired woman worker. She was moving into an apartment with 56 square meters of floor space, much more than the two rooms, totalling 28 square meters she had left.

"Now we have three bedrooms," she said. "My husband and I will sleep in the biggest facing south. One is for my three sons and one for my daughter. We have a kitchen and toilet to ourselves and the hallway is wide enough to serve as a dining area. The rent is not high, only 6.83 yuan a month. We can well afford it on our combined income of 150 yuan."

A lot of the new tenants are shop assistants, drivers, nurses, teachers, cadres and workers in construction and other trades. On investigating I found that the average floor space per person was 7.1 square meters compared to an average of 3.2 in their old accommodations. For them it is a big improvement. But overcrowped housing is still a concern for a lot of Beijing people. □



## New Rural Homes

LIU CHENLIE

**L**IUMINYING village on the plain of Daxing county south of Beijing doesn't look the way it used to. The three-story administration building of the commune production brigade of which it is part stands out prominently. Around it are neat rows of one-story cottages. The willow-lined straight road running through the center is brightened with glassed-in stands displaying photo exhibitions and current newspapers. Lining it are stores, a bath house, a kindergarten, a primary school and a clinic. If it were not for the wheat fields melting into the edge of the village I would have thought I was in a residential section of a small town.

The people of Liuminying have completely rebuilt their village from the former mess of dilapidated farmhouses scattered haphazardly between crooked rutty lanes. This has been made pos-

sible by the advance in its agriculture. Over the past few years the commune members have levelled most of their 133 hectares of arable land into paddy fields. As a result grain output has jumped to 7.5 tons per hectare, 0.1 ton above the target set for the area with a resulting increase in both individual family incomes and the brigade's collective funds. New housing had top priority for the additional money.

In 1975 the brigade's leaders drew up an overall plan for both housing and roads. It included two 12-meter-wide thoroughfares intersecting in the center of the new Liuminying, and four residential sections to be built one after another as the old housing on them was demolished. In the three years that followed, 186 houses were built as well as some factories and buildings for community use.

The houses are financed mainly by the families themselves and

LIU CHENLIE is a staff reporter for China Reconstructs.

CHINA RECONSTRUCTS



Peasants' new homes in Liiuminying village in Daxing county, Beijing municipality.

Wang Hongxun

belong to them when finished. The brigade supplies manpower, provides bricks from its kiln at low cost and lime free of charge. Water comes to each household from a water tower built by the brigade. Each house also has a well.

### The House That Zhang Built

Zhang Jincheng, 49, is one of the villagers with a new home. His family of nine lives in three sets of rooms, all facing south and opening out onto a long enclosed courtyard. Each set consists of three big rooms, averaging 22 square meters per person, eight more than in their old house. The central room of each set, which serves as kitchen and dining room, has two built-in cookstoves. The smoke from them passes through flues under the *kang* (brick platform bed) in the two rooms on either side and keeps them warm.

Zhang and his wife and his 70-year-old mother live in the center set. His eldest son and wife have the west set, neatly-furnished with a wardrobe, sideboard, nightstand, square dining table and several chairs, a wooden trunk, sewing machine, desk clock and transistor radio. The third set of rooms is reserved for Zhang's second son when he marries.

The total cost to Zhang was only about 1,000 yuan, since he used some materials from the old

house. Construction took three days. The builders were credited with work points for which they will be paid when the brigade distributes its income.

The Liiuminying production brigade is an advanced one. It is rather an exception at present in that it supplies the labor for new housing.

In most cases the entire cost of building is borne by the family itself. The nearby Qinshuiying production brigade is an example of this.

Before liberation in 1949, in Qinshuiying, only a few landlord or rich peasant families had houses of bricks with tile roofs. Most houses were of mud bricks. Now there are 250 tile-roofed brick houses in this brigade of 202 households. Forty of them were built between 1977 and early 1980. Floor space averages about 18 square meters per person (the total is 18,750 square meters).

Before the commune brigade developed its present system, each member family had to bear the expense of building all by itself. And land for new construction was not used in a planned way, as houses were put up wherever there was space. Beginning in 1977 planning was introduced. The brigade asked members who wanted to build new houses to hand in applications and particulars. After these were approved, they were asked to de-

posit 90 yuan with the brigade to cover manpower costs.

### Better Than Before

Sixty-one-year-old Zhao Wen-yuan is full of praise for this method of building. He and his family have a house with seven rooms—sufficient for the old couple, their eldest daughter with her husband and two children, and four unmarried daughters. It is fronted by a big courtyard full with peach, plum, pear, locust and poplar trees and flower beds.

Over a cup of tea Zhao told me how the four rooms on the north had been built in 1963. He had had to spend a lot of time gathering materials and rounding up friends and relatives to help. While the work was going on, good meals, drinks, cigarettes and tea had to be provided for the builders. Those four rooms had cost him 1,300 yuan, about half of which he had had to borrow. It took all of the family's savings for the next three years to pay it back.

Knowing that they wanted to build three more rooms on the west, the Zhaos led a frugal life for many years to save money for the construction. Their plan was finally realized in 1975. Had the new system already been introduced then, they would not have had to skimp and save so much or wait so long. □

# Chinese Medicine Through French Eyes

E. LAFONTAINE and L. LEGER

WE came to China at the head of a delegation to the France-China Medical Fortnight — March 30 to April 14, 1980. The delegation was composed of 14 university and hospital medical doctors from Paris — specialists in surgery, ophthalmology, rheumatology, cardiology, hematology, pediatrics, pharmacology, and so on. In Shanghai and Beijing we visited hospitals, medical schools and research institutes, and held a series of professional discussions with our Chinese colleagues. These activities helped to acquaint both sides with new gains in medicine in France as well as in China, to develop friendship between physicians and surgeons in our two countries, and to open vast horizons for mutual exchanges and cooperation.

We wish to express our gratitude to Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping of the State Council, who was Honorary Chairman of the France-China Medical Fortnight, Huang Hua, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Qian Xinzong, its Minister of Public Health, and Bai Xiqing, President of the Chinese Medical Association, and other persons in Chinese scientific and medical circles. Without their assistance and cooperation the France-China Medical Fortnight would not have achieved so much, and our efforts would have been in vain.

## Two Medicines

It should be emphasized that an equal place was given in our study

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L. LEGER is medical adviser for Air France, member of the French Academy of Medicine and President of the Academy of Surgery.

program to modern medicine (i.e. known in China as "western medicine") and to traditional Chinese medicine. In a country as vast and populous as China, the medical structures can hardly correspond to those of the West. In China's countryside the "barefoot doctors" are indispensable auxiliaries. Before and even during hospital service, they provide simple, natural and inexpensive treatment which produces no side effects.

Today the World Health Organization is rehabilitating the ancestral medical heritage of various countries, and advocating the combination of western treatments with indigenous traditional ones. It has cautioned against the tendency "to see in traditional medicine a practice that is declining and of no interest," recalling that 60 percent of the world's population depends exclusively upon it for the treatment of illness, particularly in the rural areas of developing nations still insufficiently supplied with modern medical personnel. We were pleased to note that this call from the World Health Organization is becoming a reality in China, where great efforts are being made to develop traditional medicine along with the western-type.

## Acupuncture — A Common Language

Among the most precious heritages of Chinese traditional medicine is acupuncture. In Beijing we witnessed surgical operations under acupuncture analgesia ranging from those for goiters to cardiac interventions with extracorporeal circulation.

After first witnessing operations under acupuncture analgesia six years ago, we have ourselves ex-

perimented with the technique and reported our results to the National Academy of Medicine of France.

In their essay, published together with ours in the *Presse Médicale* (August 30, 1975, pp. 2021-2026), Rabischong and his colleagues studied the physical and histological reality of the acupuncture point: they found minimal cutaneous resistance, which permits electrical probing for the point over a skin surface approximately 1 mm. square. On the surface of the point, one finds a thinning of the epidermis and modification of the collagenous fibers of the derm (true skin), which explains why the feeling of "retention" (tingling) is produced by alternating motions of vertical translation and axial rotation of the needle after its insertion.

At the point of acupuncture, there is a spiral vascular plexus similar to the glomera (small vasculo-nervous formations). These vascular structures are surrounded by a reticulus (network) of amyloid nervous fibers with bundles of myelinated (sheathed) fibers near and sometimes intertwined with them.

Thus we have proof of a specific structure at the acupuncture point.

Rabischong went even further: he attempted to transfer analgesia from one animal to another by means of serum transfusions.

He obtained blood from rabbits under analgesia, centrifuged it and injected the serum intravenously into receiver rabbits. He observed in the latter the appearance of analgesia with the same distribution characteristics as those in the donor rabbit.

But a group of researchers in Beijing had already, in 1973, ef-



Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping meets Louis de Guiringaud, honorary head of the French Medical Delegation. First left is the head of the delegation, Prof. Lucien Leger. *Zhao Tianpin*

fect ed analgesia transference by perfusing the cerebral ventricles of a receiver rabbit with cephalo-rachidian liquid from a rabbit analgesized by acupuncture.

This reference to the modest efforts in France might seem pretentious in relation to the country where acupuncture was born. The excuse may be offered that we wish to show the interest we feel in the work of our Chinese colleagues.

#### Treatment of Severe Burn Cases

The Ruijin Hospital in Shanghai has had, since 1958, a department for severe burns under the charge of Prof. Shi Jixiang, assisted by a remarkable team. Five thousand burn patients have been successfully treated. Twenty recoveries have been effected in patients with burns exceeding 80 percent (third-degree burns 50 percent), and five in subjects with third-degree burns on 90 percent of the skin's surface.

The principal therapy consisted of the excision of scar zones after a few days, followed by application of perforated pigskin grafts and, at the orifices of the perforations, autografts taken from the surface of the patient's scalp, which is often undamaged. Since they are extremely thin, such autografts may be taken again at the same location every five days.

These altogether remarkable results were reported to the Academy of Surgery of Paris. And

the originator of the technique, Prof. Shi Jixiang, was elected a member of that academy, which considers itself honored to have a corresponding member in the Chinese People's Republic.

We learned that the Ruijin Hospital is attached to the Second Shanghai Medical College, successor to the Department of Medicine at Aurora University, historically associated with France, which was itself founded in 1907 around the Hospital Sainte-Marie. This medical college has retained a sizable nucleus of French-speaking doctors. It plans, in the near future,

French ophthalmology professor Daniele Aron-Rose visits a pathology research lab in Beijing's Tongren Hospital with hospital vice director and professor of ophthalmology Zhang Xiaolou (first left). *Ye Jun*



to organize a six-year cycle of studies in French, the first year to be devoted to obtaining a working knowledge and proficiency in the language. France will not remain indifferent to this development, which she both applauds and hopes to assist.

#### Re-implanting Extremities

Re-implanting extremities is one of the activities of the Sixth People's Hospital in Shanghai.

At a conference in Kyoto (Japan) in 1977, Professors Chen Zhongwei, Qian Yunqing and Yu Zhong reported that among 438 such operations made between January 1963 and June 1976, success was attained in 83.2 percent of those involving the limbs and 57.5 percent for fingers. This last figure has been improved upon and raised to 92.3 percent by the use, since 1973, of microsurgery. As a result, 34 percent of the patients have been able to go back to their former work, with complete or almost complete restoration of sensation. And we were able to see a film that retraced the epic stories of severely injured cases, transported to Shanghai, first by small boat, then by trains and on the last lap by medically-equipped aircraft.

The application of micro-surgical techniques has brought about new progress. Among the examples are:

- Reconstruction of an amputated thumb by grafting on the second toe,
- Installation of a digital pincer after loss of a hand,
- Vascular and cutaneous grafts,
- Fibula bone grafts with immediate revascularization.

### Friendly Ties

We knew to start with that we would learn much during our stay in China. We were not disappointed.

We were struck by the quality of the work of our Chinese colleagues, the exactness of their reasoning and the clarity of their expositions. We were captivated by the excellence of the results obtained with a great simplicity of means. This contrast must be emphasized in an era where all countries in the world are worried by the increasing cost of medical care. In a country like France, where health expenditures equal or, since 1978, even surpass the entire national budget, China's example is worth thinking about. We believe that young French doctors should be sent to China for training, so that they may benefit from the knowledge of Chinese medical men in these matters.

In an original fashion, our work sessions were conducted in the form of "exchanges" in which specialists from our two countries successively set forth their certainties and also their uncertainties on a given subject. This work in common, these modest reports, appear to us more fruitful than *ex cathedra* discourses which are always incomplete.

In addition to our gains in science, we had the opportunity in these days of making new friends. "Compel them to build a tower together, and you will turn them into brothers..." said the late Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the French writer who was at once a

humanist, a man of action, a philosopher, an aviator and anti-Fascist fighter in World War II.

Is there any better meeting ground than that of science? Or any better medium of understanding than the one that unites us,

the practice of medicine, the symbol of brotherhood across the world?

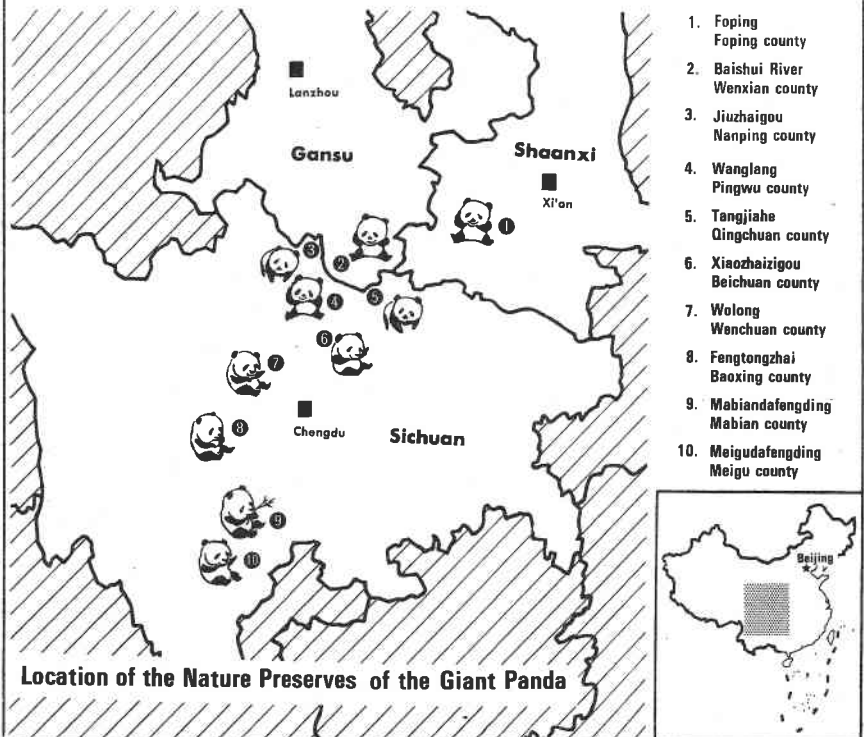
We are fully convinced that these cultural exchanges are the best cement of understanding and peace between peoples. □

## A Thousand Giant Pandas

**A** PRELIMINARY national survey carried on since 1974 has established that at least a thousand giant pandas now exist in China.

To protect the country's most prized animal, the giant panda, ten special nature preserves have been set up. Eight are in Sichuan province in the southwest and two in Gansu and Shaanxi provinces in the northwest. The three key ones are in Foping (in Shaanxi), on the Baishui River (in Gansu), and at Wolong (in Sichuan). They are administered by the Ministry of Forestry and supported by the state. The seven others are run by provincial governments, which also set up their respective administration organ. Different protective measures have been adopted to prohibit capture and hunting of giant pandas and other rare animals and to protect the natural environment for the giant pandas.

In May this year the Wolong Nature Preserve received the first group of foreign scientists from the World Wildlife Fund. They were invited to China to help with the designing of a research center for the protection of giant pandas. Peter Scott, president and founder of the World Wildlife Fund, was the leader of the group. He is a world-renowned British natural scientist and painter and himself designed the emblem of the WWF, which features a panda. □



Lusheng player during the traditional "Tiaochang" or threshing-floor dance festival in late March.

Xinhua



## The 'Lusheng'

### —Music-Maker for the Miao People

YI SU

A girl sits by the window, engrossed in her embroidery. Suddenly the soft, melodious strains of a *lusheng*, a multiple-reed wind instrument made of bamboo, float in from the moonlit night. Recognizing the tune or the way it is played, the girl springs to her feet and runs out to meet her lover. This often happens in villages of the Miao nationality in southern China, where the *lusheng* plays such an important role in the people's social life.

The instrument is also popular among other nationalities — such as the Dong, Shui and Gelao — but nowhere so much as among the Miaos. Practically every Miao knows how to play it. Almost every Miao village has a *lusheng* orchestra and a special place for dances to its music. It is played at festivals, weddings, funerals. It is heard during the slack farming seasons and in breaks in the working day. Young men use it to serenade their beloved.

In the old days a *lusheng* used to consist of five or six bamboo

pipes of different lengths, each with a brass reed inside, affixed to a long mouthpiece. The instruments could be anywhere from 20 centimeters to as much as 3 meters long. Their timber ranged from loud and sonorous to soft and sweet. Modifications in recent years have increased the number of pipes to eight, eleven or sixteen; and of notes playable on it to eight instead of the former five. Tonal range and temperament are much improved.

Miao legend claims that the *lusheng* was a gift from the gods. Grandpa Gudi, ancestor of the Miao nationality, is supposed to have ordered a fine craftsman to make the first one — in conformity with instructions given by the gods to the spirit Midi. As to the music, says the legend, the gods taught it to Midi during three divine days and nights, said to be equivalent to three years and three months by earthly reckoning.

Another legend relates that there were no holes in the first pipes. But once a pipe was accidentally put in a pile of uncured bamboo and gnawed by rats. When they found that the pipe

with holes produced better tones than those without, the craftsmen incorporated them into the instrument. To this day, rats are revered by the *lusheng* makers.

#### Yearly Competitions

*Lusheng* competitions are a tradition among the Miaos. In the Rongshui Miao Autonomous County in southern Guangxi, for instance, they are held annually on the 16th of the first month and 15th of the eighth month by the Lunar calendar. The contest begins with a grand opening ceremony. A muzzle-loader gun is fired thrice. An orchestra beats gongs and drums. Competing teams from the surrounding villages march one by one into the field, led by a respected village elder holding a banner. Then follow a dozen or so of the village's most beautiful girls and, finally, the *lusheng* players themselves. They circle the ground three times, then line up in rows.

Next, each team forms a circle. Players with smaller instruments, decorated with colorful pheasant feathers, surround the banner and the bigger *lusheng*. The leader plays a series of melodious trills as a prelude and then springs into the air. Immediately the whole team strikes up. At the height of the competition, each team tries to outdo the others in sheer volume of sound. The contest is not only musical but one of stamina.

To be the first team to enter the field was traditionally supposed to ensure good crops and healthy livestock for its members. So the order of precedence was taken very seriously — so much so that in the old days it often caused feuds between villages. Today the competitions are held under the sponsorship of communes and production brigades. And the sequence is arranged among the participants through friendly discussion. □

YI SU is a member of the research department at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing.

# Visit to the Xisha Islands

TANG ZHONGPU

ONE can go to the Xisha (Paracel) Islands in the South China Sea by sea or by air. By ship, it is 20 hours from Qinglan Harbor on the east coast of Hainan Island to Yongxing Island, the capital of the Xishas. By air it is a 1½-hour flight from Sanya.

## A View from the Air

I went by helicopter. We flew at 1,200 meters. White clouds floated in the distance. Below, the crystal-clear sea glittered under the sun.

"North Reef!" someone suddenly shouted. Beneath us was the

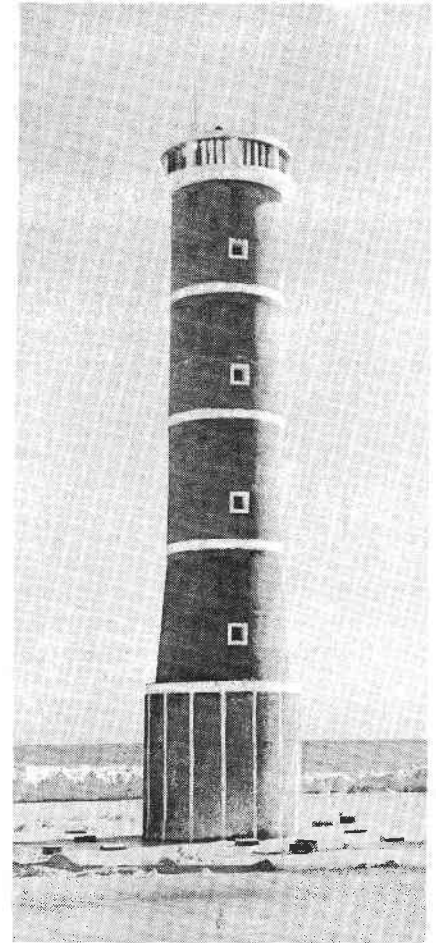
**TANG ZHONGPU** is a staff reporter for *China Reconstructs*.

Harvesting giant sea cucumbers.

silvery oval of a sand cay. It was the northernmost of some 30 islands and reefs in the Xishas. After another 15 minutes, several more islands came into view from north to south. From the air they were breathtakingly beautiful. No wonder poets have described them as a string of pearls in the South China Sea.

At 11:50 a.m. the plane landed on Yongxing.

I found there new cream-colored buildings amid green coconut groves. They include party, government and army offices, a department store, bank, post office, hospital, weather station, club and guesthouse. Cargo ships and naval vessels came in and out of the newly-dredged harbor. Motor vehicles



Lighthouse distinguishes an unmarked bit of coast. Xia Ming

moved on the round-the-island road.

## Prefectural Capital

Over a five-story building near the south coast flew our national flag. It housed the people's government of the Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha islands which administers all China's islands in the South China Sea. Under it are offices for exploration and development, protection of natural resources, material supplies, welfare, public health and security.

Major local government decisions in recent years included some aimed at protecting the natural beauty of the islands. Vice-Chairman Fu Guohai, a man in his fifties, told me that they used to export guano—nitrate deposits accumulated from the droppings of sea birds, used for fertilizer. But ceaseless digging for guano, on a surface only 6 meters above sea level, threatened the island and its beauty. So the local government banned the

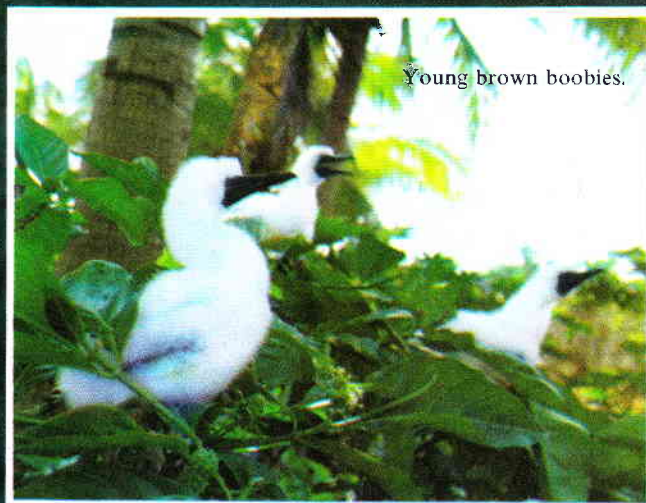




Stone tablet commemorating the recovery of the Xisha Islands by Chinese naval forces, erected on November 24, 1946.

Pisonia forest on the Xisha Islands.





Young brown boobies.

The islands are a haven for sea birds.

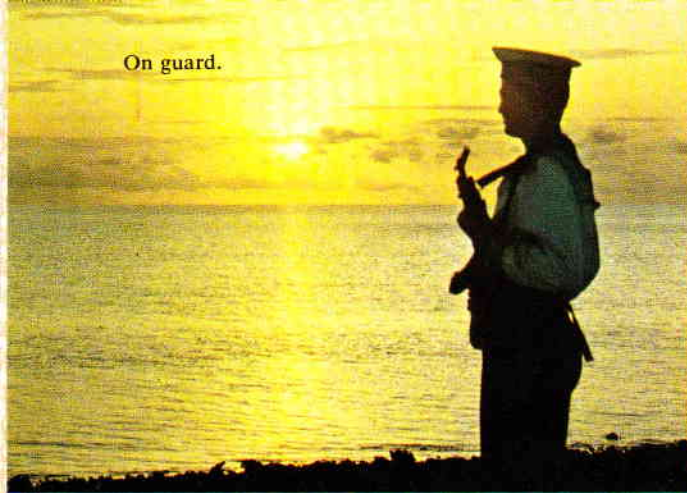


Oceanographical workers gathering specimens off the islands.



Dredging for a new harbor.

On guard.



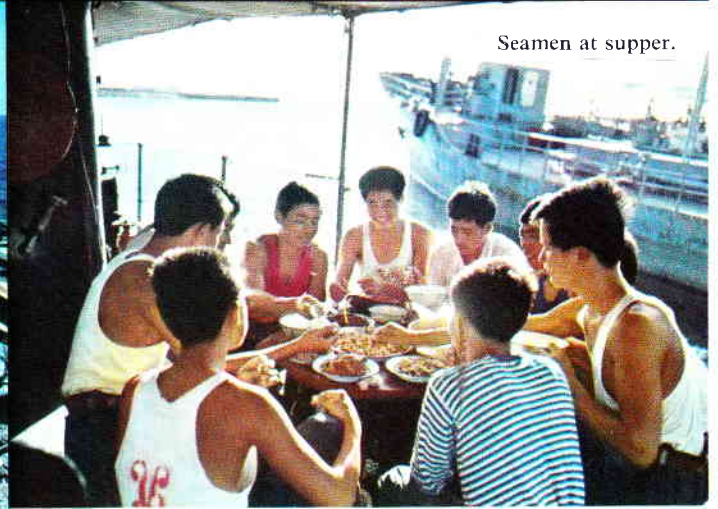
Beachcombing for birds' eggs.



Artists from the mainland performing for the naval units stationed on the islands.



Seamen at supper.



A corner of Shidao Island.

Photos by Liu Chen



digging of guano and dissolved the company engaged in it.

An afforestation group has planted 20,000 trees on Yongxing Island in recent years. Only some tropical trees of little economic value had grown there before. Now coconut, banana, jack fruit, papaya, loquat and Masson's pines have been introduced. It was a hard job to establish them in this place of coral and sand. Saplings, soil and fresh water all had to be brought from the mainland. In addition, sugarcane, sisal, corn and many kinds of vegetables are being successfully grown on Yongxing. According to a botanist, the variety of plants on the Xisha Islands now numbers more than 200—tenfold the number Darwin found growing on comparable coral reefs in the Pacific. "This is because of the hard work put in over a long time by the Chinese people here," he observed. The vice-chairman entertained me with a big fresh coconut. Its sweet, refreshing juice made me appreciate all the more the miracle wrought by our people's diligent labor.

### Part of Our Territory

Engineer Yang, a young man who had come in 1974, had helped design and build the main projects on the island, told me about them. The military defenses are nearing completion. Many new houses have been built for army-men and local residents. A new lighthouse guides ships away from the reefs. A control tower on East Island serves airline traffic.

Soldiers and sailors from all parts of China are posted on Yongxing and the other islands. They can be heard speaking dialects from all over—Sichuan, Hunan and Hebei provinces, Shanghai and Beijing.

Asked if he missed home, one sailor from the mainland replied,

"Are there so many fish to eat in my hometown?"

"Or so many beautiful shells," said another.

"This is our territory," added a third. "To guard these islands is to guard our homeland."

Newcomers to Yongxing usually visit a memorial stone commemorating the recovery of the Xisha Islands by the Chinese Navy in 1946. They were invaded and occupied first by France, and then by Japan in the 1930s and early 1940s. The Chinese government recovered them in 1946 after Japan's defeat and surrender.

At one time during the Vietnam War, three islands were occupied by the South Vietnamese regime of Nguyen Van Thieu. In January 1974, the invaders were driven out after a sea battle in which naval forces of the Chinese People's Liberation Army sank one enemy warship and damaged three more.

More recently, the present Vietnamese government, to serve its own ambitions and those of its social-imperialist backers, has made unwarranted claims covering these islands. This, despite the fact that its own leaders, maps and textbooks had in the past repeatedly declared them indisputably Chinese. China, of course, will never cede her territory here to anyone. Earlier this year, the Chinese Foreign Ministry published a document reviewing a host of historical records and facts proving China's historical sovereignty over the islands.

### Scientific Surveys

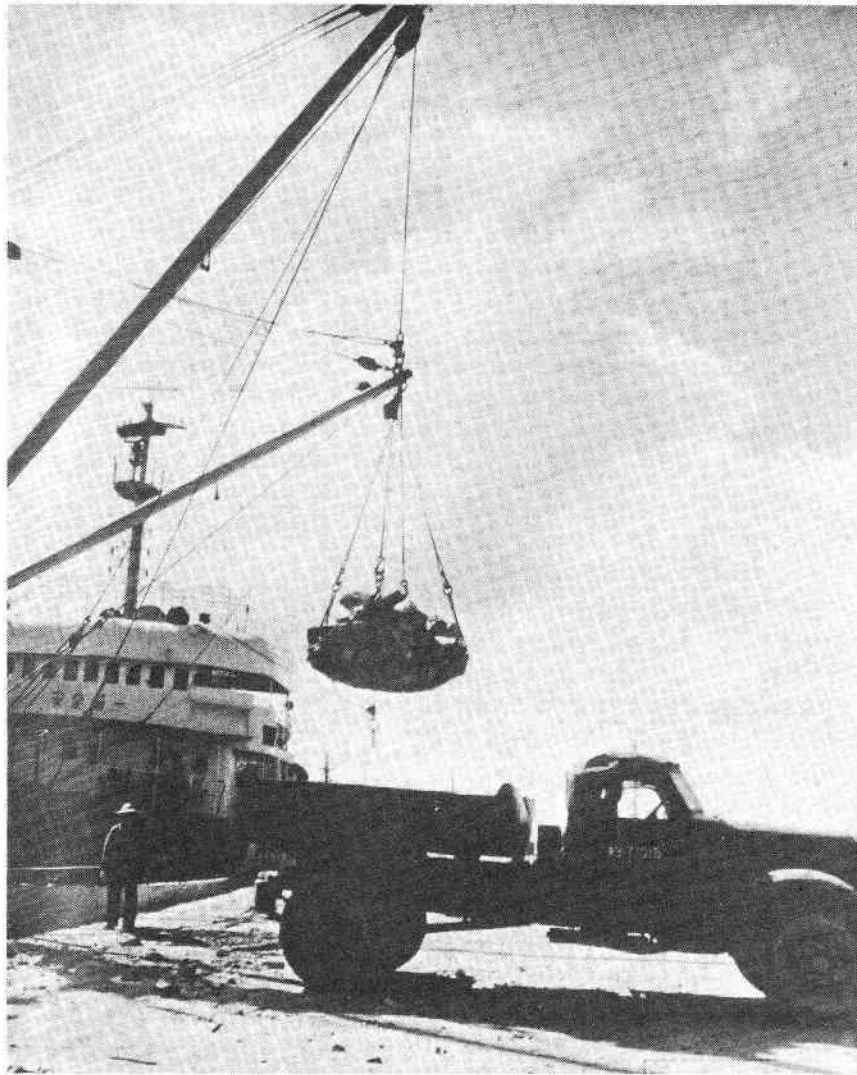
Chinese scientists have stepped on virtually every coral reef and rock in the Xisha Islands. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, teams of scientists from the mainland came periodically to study their

geology, soil, guano and phosphate deposits. In the new China, scientific investigation has accelerated. Recently several groups from the Oceanographic Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences and from the Marine Life Museum in the seaport city of Qingdao, Shandong province, have come to study the secrets of the sea. *Plants of the Xisha Islands* and *Soil of the Xisha Islands* are among China's recent scientific publications on the area.

East Island, the second-largest in the Xisha group, is an especially rich site for studies of tropical life. Approaching it, I was fascinated by the multi-colored coral reef flashing in the sun through the transparent blue sea. Ashore were lush green forests of *Pisonia* trees and communities of sea birds, the best-known being the brown booby. Young boobies are covered with snow-white fluff, while the adult birds, about the size of a duck, are dark brown with a white belly and have red webbed feet and green bills. During the day they hover in flocks over the sea, catching fish and shrimp. At dusk they return to land to perch in the *Pisonia* trees. Hunting of rare species is forbidden. The rule is enforced by nature conservation workers who patrol the forests guarding against any damage to plants and animals.

### Islands Were Always China's

We left East Island for the Yongle Islands in the west of the Xishas. Zhongjiang (Triton) Island abounds in top shells, hence also named "Top-Shell Island". The main islands are Guangjin (Palm), Shenheng (Duncan), Shanhu (Pattle), Ganquan (Robert) and Jinyin (Money) islands. They are scattered close to one another in the shape



Unloading materials for expanding the harbor.

of a horseshoe facing the south. The water in the bay is several meters deep, while outside the depth reaches over 100 meters. We landed at every island.

As early as the Song dynasty (960-1279) the Xishas were officially named "jiuruluozhou" (Nine Top-Shell-Shaped Isles), an apt description of their topography.

This shows that the Chinese people knew them well 1,000 years ago. On Shanhu Island I found a small temple built of coral rocks. Inside are a stone statue and incense burner, exactly like those in small temples built by fishermen in the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties along the coast of Guangdong province.

On Ganquan Island a dwelling site dating from the Tang (618-907) and Song dynasties was excavated in 1974, yielding a wealth of porcelains as well as iron choppers and pots, bird bones and shells and charcoal ashes left over after cooking. In the one-meter-thick coral sand on Jinyin Island well-preserved porcelains of the Qing dynasty were found. Shenhang and Guangjin islands yielded copper coins of the Song and Ming dynasties. These relics indicate that the Chinese people were the first to come to develop the Xisha Islands.

Today China's naval forces stationed in the islands of the South China Sea are both defenders and builders. Making their homes there, they have erected dwellings that can stand typhoons as well as barracks and strong fortifications. They are sinking wells, planting trees, opening vegetable gardens, raising poultry and livestock and beautifying the landscape. The once desolate islands are full of life. □

Navy men after work.



Young trees for windbreaks.



# Marvels Done in Dough

TAN MANNI



The Goddess of the Luo River

**T**ANG SUGUO chooses a gob from a trayful of colored dough and between greased palms rolls it into a ball the size of his thumb. Poising it atop a bamboo splint, he presses it into shape and affixes bits of black and pink paste with a blade made of ox horn and a set of facial features emerge. He winds a sliver of black dough into the high coil of an ancient hairdo, adding tiny flowers made in his palm. After the body and limbs of the figurine are built around the splint, he begins to clothe it in thin layers of dough, starting from the skirt and working up to the outer robe. A wire coated with dough becomes a long flying scarf and soon the Goddess of the Luo River, a famous beauty of Chinese legend floats gracefully before us.

Tang Suguo is engaged in the ancient art of dough modeling. It probably came into being for making effigies of demons to be destroyed. Earliest reliable evidence of it dates from the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.). In the Song dynasty (960-1279) it was used for pastry decoration and toys. Later the custom arose of using all kinds of objects made of dough as ritual offerings to the dead.

It was also the art of Tang Suguo's father, Tang Zibo (1882-1971), who raised it from a folk craft of toy vendors to a decorative art. The old craft continues

to be popular, and still today in the lanes of Chinese cities one can come upon a group of children clustering around the spread-out wares of an elderly folk artist, surrendering their precious ice-cream-treat money for an irresistible dough chick or rabbit. At the same time, the best works of Tang Suguo and his father, now collectors' items, cost a fortune. So closely has the craft become associated with these two that they are rarely known by their given names, but only as "the Doughmen Tang."

## Doughman Tang Senior

The son of a docker and brick carver, the elder Tang was born in the town of Tongxian, east of Beijing. All sorts of artisans frequented the town, which was the northern terminal of the Grand Canal. As a child selling peanuts in the market, Tang Zibo was fascinated by them. He did not let poverty stop him from developing his talent. At the age of 12 he could copy the works of local masters of traditional painting with such great fidelity that he was taken on as a pupil. From them he learned to draw figures and flowers in the ink wash technique of the *xie yi* (expression of the spirit) school. On his own he studied Chinese literature, calligraphy, seal carving and art restoration and later carried the principles he had learned into his chosen craft, which he developed to a high level. The types of

figurines he sculpts now constitute a school of plastic art in their own right.

Tang Zibo's innovations included doing away with the strings and the splint traditionally used to hold the dough figure in shape. He also devised a method of mixing preservatives and pigments with the rice and wheat flour and steaming it so that the figures, once dried and hardened, would keep their shape and color without cracking or fading and, encased in a glass case, last a very long time. Along with the usual bright colors of dough toys, he used the ore pigments of Chinese painting to produce subtle hues of classic elegance. He would fix tiny pieces of gold or silver, particle by particle to the dough to create the effect of embroidery. Silk floss often supplanted dough for the hair for a more realistic look.

He greatly enriched the subject matter of dough sculpture by extending it to well-known characters in Chinese literature, operas and Buddhist stories. His versatility enabled him to portray in depth the spirit of these characters, as well as true-to-life expressions and natural movement.

Groups of mini-figurines set in nutshell are another of his inventions. Inside half a walnut shell, in one of his works, through a magnifying glass one can find a famous stage scene with 18 scholars mounted on donkeys, each with a different expression, posture and attire. In the

TAN MANNI is staff reporter for China Reconstructs.



Tang Suguo at work.

background are rocks, a stream, trees, a bridge and houses.

### The Wandering Habit

By the beginning of this century Tang Zibo was already famous in Beijing art circles and often a guest in the homes of noted artists and scholars. His dough creations had won acclaim at home and abroad. Nevertheless, he continued as he had begun, traveling over much of China peddling his folk toys — not to make a living but as a way to observe the world, study the people and their ways of living, and tour legendary places and scenic spots. Temples, full of images, were his favorite places. He used to tell how once, late at night, he came upon a deserted temple in the mountains. He slipped through the space between the loosely-fitting double doors and climbed up onto the cobwebbed shrine. By feel he recognized among the statues a rarely-found one of a warrior Buddha. He spent the rest of the night studying with his hands in the dark the way the figure was portrayed and clad.

His accumulated observations resulted in piles of sketches, among them a thousand masks of Beijing opera characters. To make his opera figures more authentic, he even moved his family to a village outside Beijing where opera costumes were made and got his wife and daughter taken on as embroiderers in the workshop. Through them he made a comprehensive study of the patterns on these gorgeous stage garments.

His love for opera enabled him to capture the essence even of the different portrayals of the same character by different famous actors. This was borne out by the following story: Once Mei Lanfang, the noted player of women's roles, saw a dough figurine of the concubine in a famous Beijing opera scene doing her sword dance for Xiang Yu, one of the overthrowers of the State of Qin in 207 B.C. Immediately recognizing not just the character but that it was his own portrayal, he burst out, "That's me!"

After the liberation in 1949 Tang Zibo taught his craft at the Central Academy of Fine Arts and the Institute of Industrial

Arts and Crafts. Many of his works were presented as gifts to international organizations and foreign friends, and photographs of them were compiled into books.

### Second Generation

"There is no limit to artistic perfection. Now it is up to you to develop our art further," Tang Zibo on his deathbed told his second son Tang Suguo. Forty-year-old Tang Suguo has lived up to his father's expectations and evolved a unique style of his own.

The elder Tang started to teach his art to his daughter and three sons when they were very young children. "Making dough figures, paper kites and lanterns were our pastimes," son Tang Suguo recalls. "At the New Year we made puppets of donkey skin and put on a shadow play. In addition to our homework, after school we had to do exercises set by our parents in Chinese painting and calligraphy. We had to memorize poems. On holidays Father would take us to a temple or shrine and give us a lecture on its Buddhist sculpture. We had to remember the characteristic parts of the statues and be able to recreate them in dough.

"Once a French artist came to visit Father. I don't know what he thought of the way we all stared at him during his hour's stay. But we knew that later we would have to sculpt his head and portray his expression in as few lines as possible."

Of Tang Zibo's four children, only Tang Suguo has stayed with the craft. His sister, who had shown even more talent, died young. One of his brothers opted for atomic energy research. The other is an architect. But Tang Suguo's nephew is now apprenticed to him and working in his studio. And the favorite pastime of his 11-year-old daughter is — copying his dough figurines.

After his graduation from high school, Tang Suguo joined his father in 1956, doing research at the Institute of Industrial Arts





Tang Suguo's figure "Zhong Kui Enraged at His Bat".



The Bodhisattva Guanyin with a fishing basket.



Buddha with the Long Brows.



Scene from the classic drama "The Western Chamber".  
The beautiful girl is startled to see a young scholar.

and Crafts. His works were displayed later at the Seventh World Festival of Youth and Students in Austria, and later in 1958 at an international exhibition of plastic arts in Moscow. By 1966 he was achieving new artistic heights after six years of formal training in the western tradition of sculpture at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. The exquisite dough models which Chairman Hua Guofeng took with him as gifts on his tour of western Europe last year were Tang Suguo's creations. He now heads the dough sculpture studio of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and was chosen to be a member of the select Chinese Artists' Association.

### Chinese Plus Western

Tang Suguo's own special style follows the family tradition of employing the techniques of Chinese painting, but also has assimilated aspects of western art, utilizing techniques and styles of great ancient and contemporary masters of European sculpture.

His own works — very few more than a dozen centimeters high — when studied in photographic enlargements show the perfection of life-sized sculpture, with expressive facial details and proper proportion. His use of color includes ambient colors and sometimes hints of impressionist style, which is a long way from traditional Chinese painting or dough-craft.

Tang Suguo explained his style using a figurine entitled "Zhong Kui Enraged at His Unpunctual Bat". It illustrates an old tale. Zhong Kui, a legendary figure, took first place in the imperial officers' examination but was refused a position because of his ugly face, which was deformed by demons. He died of grief but his spirit appeared to the emperor in a dream, still fighting the demons. He had tamed a bat to guide him in this task to which he had dedicated himself. One day when the bat did not show up on time he became very angry.

Zhong Kui has become a symbol for deterring evil, or for good luck. So the scene of him enraged at his bat (the word has the same sound as that for "happiness" in Chinese) used to be mounted over gates like a guardian god.

"The most important thing in modeling a dough figure is to bring out the character's spirit, my father used to stress," Tang Suguo recalls. "Father had an axiom: The best figurine is one in which from close up one can see the spirit, yet from a distance the whole bearing reveals the character. The eyes in particular convey the spirit, and the brows the mood. Both eyes and brows are, as we say 'linked to the heart'. I gave this portrait of the enraged Zhong Kui very deep eye sockets, with the eyes rolled up showing a lot of the whites. This and the closely-knit upward-slanting brows bring out his indignation. The wrinkled, upturned nose is foreshortened to create a pleasantly ugly face. Exaggeration of his beard blowing in the wind and of the hairs bristling from his ears, conveys his perturbed state of mind."

To show the awesome air and strength of Zhong Kui, Tang Suguo has utilized the exaggeration traditional in depicting warriors: Zhong Kui has no neck,

his chin flows right into his chest; his earlobes droop to his broad shoulders; he has the rounded paunch dictated by tradition. His loosely-falling wide-sleeved robe is formed from a single piece of dough. The few incisive folds on the sleeves reveal at once the violence of his movement and the correct body proportions underneath. Similarly, in the *xie yi* (expression of the spirit) school of painting, the artist uses only a wash of ink and a few brush strokes to show the way a person holds himself or the mood of a landscape. Viewed from a distance, this enraged Zhong Kui is like a ball of fire, flaming with righteousness against the devils.

Other subjects for which Tang Suguo is noted are his figurines of monks in meditation, stage characters and Buddhist figures.

In depiction of characters from western literature and contemporary life, Tang Suguo has gone much farther than his father. Among them are Othello, Romeo and Juliet and many figurines of minority dancers. His "Seiji Ozawa Conducting" was a rare eye-catcher at an exhibition of his dough sculptures last year. Viewers remarked, "If the Boston Symphony conductor would run across this figurine, he would certainly exclaim, 'That's me!'" □

Seiji Ozawa Conducting



Othello



# Our Four-Hour Stop in Taiwan

LI FURONG

ON May 23rd after playing in the Fifth Asian Table Tennis Championships in Calcutta our Chinese delegation was flying to Hongkong via Bangkok on Thai Airliner TG 610. Because of a typhoon the plane was unable to land at Hongkong and had been informed by the airport control tower that it would be necessary to stop over at the Taoyuan airport in Taipei. Despite this unexpected change, we felt quite happy to have the chance to visit Taiwan.

"What do you think Taiwan is like? It's a very beautiful place, isn't it?" Liu Yang, a 17-year-old girl player asked Zhang Deying, the oldest on the team.

"Yes, it is," broke in a Thai Airlines stewardess who had overheard her question. "It's sometimes called 'Treasure Island', and has a lot of places for sightseeing. Since you have this chance — a rare one for you — make the most of it." She invited us to her home in Taipei if we were able to leave the airport. We were warmed by her obvious sincerity.

In an hour we reached the Taoyuan airport on the northwestern edge of Taipei. "Bring your bats along," I cried out to my teammates, "If we get a chance to go to town we'll play an exhibition match for our Taiwan compatriots."

We were led to the waiting room north to the airport where we sat down to beer, soda and sandwiches served by Thai Airlines.

I WAS sitting with the vice-head of the delegation, Zheng Min-

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LI FURONG, vice-chairman of the Chinese Table Tennis Association, headed the Chinese Table Tennis Delegation to the Fifth Asian Table Tennis Championships in Calcutta, India.

zhi, when three members of the airport staff joined us. They spoke fluent *putonghua* (standard Chinese) and showed much interest in everything that was happening on the mainland, asking, for example, about people's incomes, housing conditions, prices and market supply. One even asked us how much a shirt cost. We were all casually dressed; some wore suits, others ordinary everyday clothes. They were intrigued by our clothing. One inquired, "Isn't everyone on the mainland dressed in blue?"

We explained that life now was much better than before, but our economy was still recovering so the average standard of living on the mainland was not as high as that in Taiwan, but that our livelihood was guaranteed.

The 30 years of separation plus the harm done by distorted propaganda have resulted in lack of comprehension and even misunderstanding. The Taiwan people know little about us, and what we know about them is also very limited.

One staff member asked us whether we were still using propeller-driven planes on the mainland. I told him that they were only used for short-distance flights within a province. Boeing 747 jets fly Beijing-Paris and Beijing-Tokyo lines, and other Boeings, Tridents and IL 62s fly between big cities.

Our conversation attracted the attention of the saleswomen at the counters selling duty-free cosmetics, cigarettes and wines. At first they just leaned over the counters and listened. Gradually they left their counters and joined us.

"Don't you feel nervous here?" one of them asked.

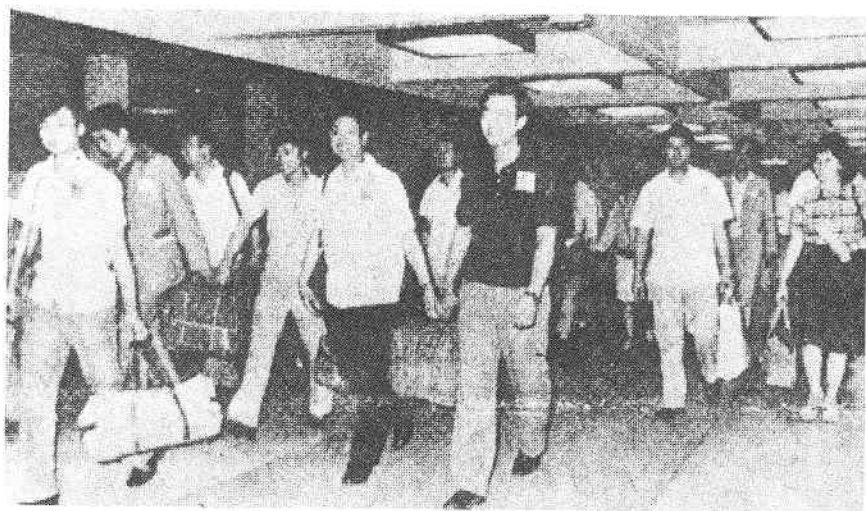
"What for? What's there for a Chinese to be nervous about when he's on a part of China?" one of our players replied. "Do I look nervous?" asked Huang Liangkai humorously.

LEARNING that we had just played at the Fifth Asian Table Tennis Championships, they were keen to hear the scores. They congratulated us when we told them that we had won the titles in all 7 events. We told them that mainland athletes were doing well in badminton, calisthenics, diving, men's and women's volleyball. They also asked us about men's basketball on the mainland. A police officer who had come over told us that not long ago a Taiwan amateur baseball team had beaten an American team. Taiwan excels at basketball and *weiqi*, he added. At this point our English interpreter Xu Zengwu said, "We hope that some of Taiwan's best teams will come to the mainland for exhibition competitions and we can send ours to Taiwan as well. If there's difficulty about coming and going, we can have the competitions in Hongkong."

WHEN a young woman of 21 at the cosmetics counter found out that Zhang Deying was from Shanghai, she exclaimed, "Shanghai! My family's from Shanghai, too! My parents both lived there 30 years ago, but I've never been there."

"When you come to Shanghai some day, remember to come to my home for a visit," Zhang Deying said warmly.

The conversation went on until it was time for the saleswomen to change shifts. One of them, Huang Cuiyu had become engaged to be married just the day before.



**The Chinese Table Tennis Delegation at Taoyuan airport in Taiwan.**

*UPI photo/reproduced from the Hongkong Wen Hui Bao*

scenic spots, or get the chance for a game of table tennis with Taiwan players. But this accidental visit made us deeply aware that reunification of Taiwan with the mainland is the mutual desire of the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. It is our sincere hope that more contacts will be established between athletes on Taiwan and the mainland. The joint participation of both Taiwan and mainland track and field athletes in the track and field meet at Mt. San Antonio College in California in April was a good beginning. □

Offering us two "xi bing" (happiness cakes), she said gaily, "I'm really lucky to meet you today. Take these 'xi bing' and share my happiness." Zhang Deying accepted the "xi bing" and wished her happiness. A little later, the bride-to-be peeled two pineapples, sprinkled them with a pinch of salt and had them sent to us. Pineapples are a specialty of Taiwan, famous for their refreshing sweetness. We found their reputation well-deserved.

The saleswoman whose family home was in Shanghai happened to be surnamed Zhang too. She gave each of our six women players a bottle of perfume, and opened one to spray a bit on them. Our men players were offered a Taiwan delicacy — dried, preserved beef. In return we gave them the badges we were wearing from China's National Games. We also took snapshots together.

**A**T 6:30 it was announced that we were flying back to Hongkong. We shook hands with them, reluctant to leave. We told them we hoped that they would come to the mainland some day to see mountains and rivers of our motherland, visit their kinfolk and see the birthplace of the Chinese nation. One airport staff member joked, "I hope there'll be more typhoons like this, typhoons that'll bring you to Taiwan."

It's a pity we didn't have enough time to visit some of Taiwan's

**Delegation head Li Furong and vice-head Zheng Minzhi exhibit gifts given them at the airport.**

*Hongkong Wen Hui Bao*



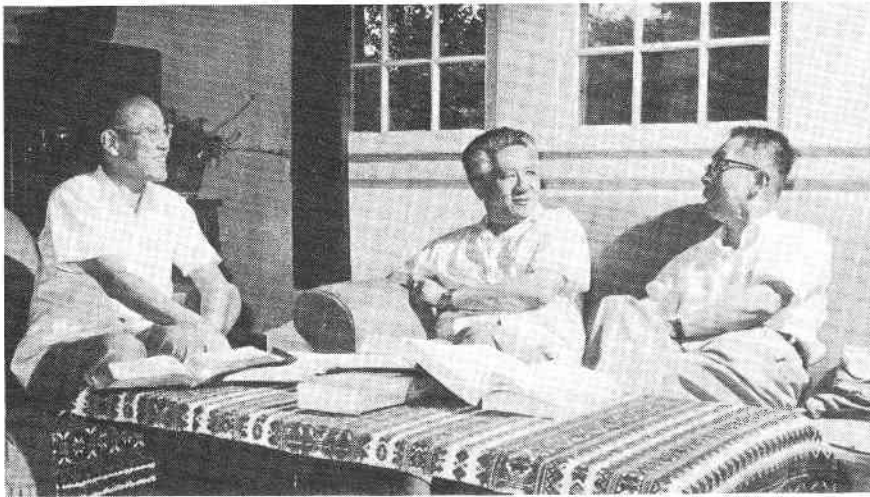
**Chinese table tennis player Chang Deying (second left) chats with a saleswoman in the airport.**

*UPI photo/reproduced from the Hongkong Wen Hui Bao*



# Speaking as a Chinese Christian

K. H. TING



Bishop K. H. Ting (middle) and colleagues at Nanjing Union Theological College discuss the new Chinese translation of the Bible. *Liu Liutang*

**P**ATRIOTISM is a good word. But it is in bad odor in some countries. When our group of four Chinese Christians visited U.S. churches in September last year and spoke about the patriotic feelings of the Chinese Christians, we got mixed reactions. It made some good American friends think of the chauvinists, isolationists, white-

supremacists and the shouters of "my country, right or wrong" — who also invoke the name of patriotism.

Well, we Chinese Christians don't feel apologetic about being patriotic. The reason is that the country we cherish is a people's republic, the result of our people's long self-sacrificing struggle, a land

*Prof. K. H. Ting, a bishop, is acting chairman of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee of Chinese Christians, a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National Political Consultative Conference and a deputy to the National People's Congress. In the 1940s he studied theology in Canada and the U.S.A. and was secretary of the World Student Christian Federation. Returning to China, in 1951 he was appointed Principal of Nanjing Union Theological College. Since 1979 he has been deputy president of the Nanjing University and director of its Center for Religious Studies.*

in which its citizens of many nationalities, majority and minority, and of all cultural and religious backgrounds unite in the effort to overcome age-old backwardness and shortcoming to strive toward new heights. It is a country in which, for the first time in our history, the possibilities latent in human individuals are given opportunities for development and fulfilment as we work together for socialist modernization. We are patriotic in the sense of not standing aloof from, but with, our own people in their aspirations and yearnings for progress to a great future.

Chinese Christians have not always been patriotic in the past. Christianity was introduced into China largely at the time of western penetration — economic, diplomatic, military and cultural. In that historical milieu, in spite of the good intentions of many individual missionaries, it was difficult to draw a sharp line between the secular drive for western domination and the religious movement of western evangelism. The missionary movement did, in fact, have a denationalizing effect on Chinese converts. It alienated us Christians from the rest of the Chinese people and made us foreign to our own people's struggle for liberation. There were even some Christians who could pray to God to drown the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army when they crossed the Changjiang (Yangtze) River in their advance to victory in 1949.

## Our "Three-Self Movement"

Soon after the liberation in 1949 those of our Christian leaders who were the most aware started a movement to raise the social



Baptism on Easter.

He An

and political conscience of fellow-Christians, and to make China's churches self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. It was through this movement that Christians in China became truly patriotic, fully Chinese. Through this "three-self movement" as we call it, Christianity in China has ceased to be an appendage to western mission bodies and become, in the full sense, a Chinese religion which self-respecting Chinese citizens can freely embrace. In short, this movement is aimed at making the churches in China just as Chinese as churches in the United States are American and those in England are English. During the last thirty years, the churches in China have, for the first time in their history, acquired a Chinese selfhood, a Chinese identity. This is the essential pre-requisite for any type of Christianity to take root in Chinese soil, and for any Christian witness to be borne effectively in the new China.

As a fruit of this movement, Chinese people in general have substantially changed their attitude toward us Christians. The number of Chinese Christians has been estimated at about three mil-

lion Roman Catholics and seven hundred thousand Protestants. At the very least, the number has not decreased in the last thirty years. This could not have happened without a more favorable attitude towards Christianity on the part of our people at large. For a group of Christians to work within Nanjing University as its Center for Religious Studies, with ample opportunities for exchange of views with non-Christian friends in this intellectual community, would have been quite unthinkable with-

out the impact of the three-self movement.

### People's Right to Believe

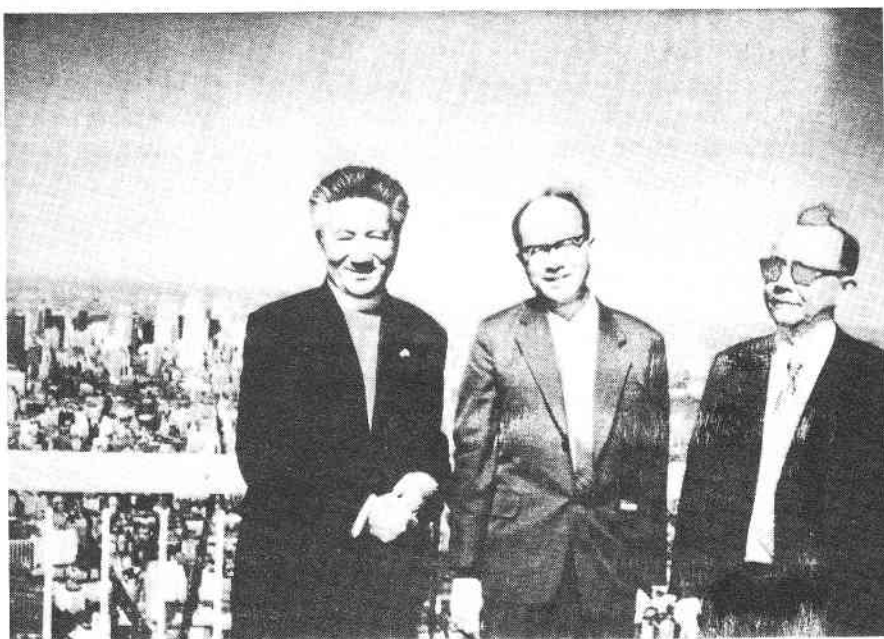
It is a policy of the People's Republic of China to protect the people's right to believe in religion. There should be no discrimination against believers of any faith. Leaders of all religions take part in the People's Congresses and the People's Political Consultative Conferences, at the national, provincial and local levels. Jointly with representatives of all other sec-

A Sunday service in Beijing.

He An



Bishop Ting (left) in New York with Han Wenzao (middle) and Li Shoubao, two other prominent Christian members of the Chinese religious delegation.



## Announcing

# "China Reconstructs" in Chinese

In response to suggestions and requests from overseas Chinese and Chinese living in Hongkong and Macao, a Chinese-language edition of *China Reconstructs* will appear later this year.

In its main content, it will conform to the editions in other languages. That is, it will report vividly and factually on China's politics, social conditions, the life of the people, and the progress of the four modernizations, as well as education and the arts. And it will present historical subjects, and the splendid culture and natural beauty of China.

Other features, special to the Chinese edition, will include articles on the ancestral areas of the overseas Chinese and a special column to help them locate their relatives. And to conform with the reading habits of most overseas Chinese, the edition will be printed in the original complex Chinese characters set in vertical lines.



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tions, they air their views on policies both domestic and foreign. No one religion in China enjoys any special position of preference.

Many of our revolutionary leaders are atheists but their faithfulness to the policy of religious freedom is not hard to understand. That they adhere to atheism does not at all imply that their first interest lies in making every Chinese an atheist. Their first priority is to unite the whole people, including believers, in a common front against backwardness in agriculture, in industry, in science and technology and in national defense, and in the common effort to enable our people to live better through achieving modernization in all those fields. For the sake of this all-important unity, religious faiths and practices are respected.

We Christians don't have to agree with others in their views on religion and on Christianity. But we have every reason to take our place within the united front for national prosperity, which we, too, long for. Christians in the

world have been cooperating with adherents of other religions, and with atheists, for twenty centuries, and in a multitude of ways. Why should we now hold back?

Since the downfall of the notorious gang of four with its unpopular and bankrupt ultra-leftist attempts to eradicate religion, China is returning to the long-tested correct policy of religious freedom as laid down by Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai. We Christians, in all walks of life, can again practice our religion and are doing our best to contribute to our country's four modernizations.

### **Our Strong Confidence**

Today, more and more churches are being re-opened. Regular theological education is to be carried on at our theological college in Nanjing. Publication of the Chinese Bible and other Christian literature is proceeding apace. The idea of us having a national structure devoted to helping Christian communities across the country to strengthen their pastoral

life and work is being warmly acclaimed.

We are aware that in churches abroad, a small number of people take a hostile attitude to the new China. They attack our principled stand on the "three-self" concept, and try to poke their hands into our church life under the garb of "evangelism," "fellowship" and "research". They are in reality trying to push Chinese Christianity back to the colonial past and make it bear once again the onus of a foreign religion that make crypto-westerners of Chinese Christians. We trust confidently that these individuals will fail to win the support of the majority of Christians abroad.

With those Christians abroad who assume an attitude of equality and friendliness towards us, we are ready to enter into normal Christian relations and fellowship.

Ours is a small church. We have much work to do. We earnestly pray that a church worthy of the new China will soon rise and stand solidly on the soil of our beloved motherland. □





Tongrentang's retail department in Beijing.

# Ancient Imperial Pharmacy—Now the People's

YOU XIYUAN and LIU HONGFA

Dispensers weigh out prescriptions.



**I**N the labyrinthine lanes of the hurly-burly shopping district of Da Sha La, a traditional market place of old Beijing, stands the 311-year-old Tongrentang, once apothecaries to China's emperors. Today the shop is a busy state pharmacy. Its name, and many of its products, are known far and wide not only throughout China but in Southeast Asia and further afield. Interest is increasing as the medical world and the general public grow more aware of the side-effects of some modern "miracle drugs"—antibiotic or chemical—and turn back to re-appraise herbal medicines, which are sometimes as efficacious with less risk.

## Strictness of Standards

Tongrentang's reputation rests on the fine quality of the large repertory of the medicines it prepares, compounds and dispenses. Its formulas range from home remedies to prescriptions made out by China's famous doctors over the centuries. Many were once closely guarded court

**YOU XIYUAN** is a correspondent and **LIU HONGFA** a staff reporter for *China Reconstructs*.

or family secrets, but no longer. Today they are used in the 495 patent medicines this establishment prepares and sells to the public.

Another reason for Tongrentang's fame is the high standard and purity of its drugs and the accuracy and care that goes into their preparation. Whether they are decoctions, pills, ointments, powders or pellets, the ingredients of plant, animal or mineral origin which go into them, are of the best

quality, carefully selected and processed to obtain the maximum therapeutic effect. For example, the ginseng root which features prominently in many of Tongrentang's famous tonics has to come from one place, Jilin province, and nowhere else. The root of the tree peony must come from Wuhu in Anhui province, the white peony from Dongyang in Zhejiang province, *Angelica sinensis* from Minxian county in Gansu province and so on. Honey, mostly used as

a binding agent and preservative, must originate in the nectar of the jujube flower of Xinglong county, Hebei province, or locust flower in the outskirts of the capital and or linden flower from northeast China. Botanical sources of drugs must be of the right variety and age.

In the old imperial days the shop was always ensured of the best raw materials by its patron, the imperial court. They were collected as needed by its officials and sent up as tribute. The pharmacy also enjoyed a large annual subsidy from the court.

Such was Tongrentang's position during the Qing dynasty that business at the big winter and spring herbal fairs held in Qizhou (today's Anguo county, Hebei province) could not begin without the presence of its buyers, who would have first pick of whatever was being offered.

#### Meticulous Work

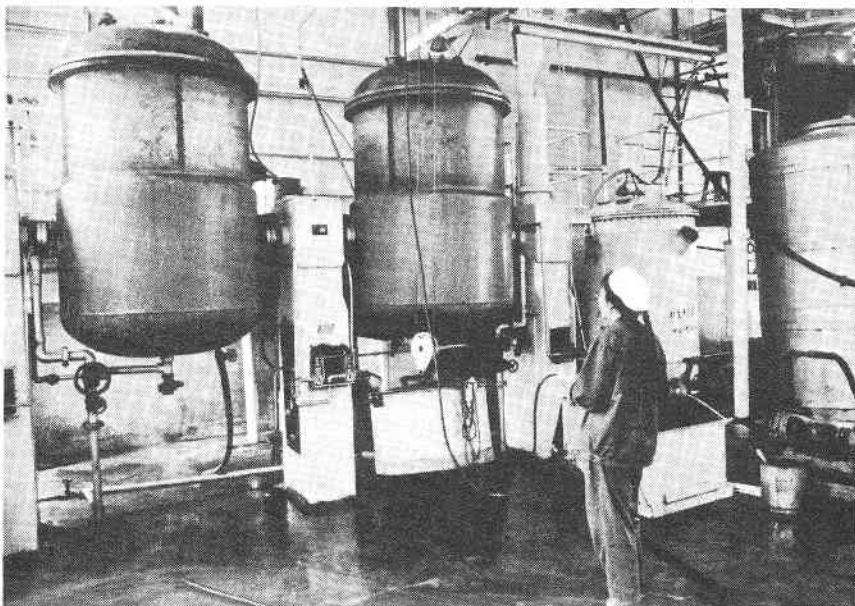
The old pharmacy's founder in the 17th century, Yue Zunyu, insisted that, "However complicated and onerous the processing, every step must be strictly and meticulously followed. And however expensive the ingredients, the full required amount must be used, whatever the cost." It was a remarkable thing to insist upon in those days before the advent of modern science, and it certainly contributed to the efficacy of the pharmacy's products. Since China's liberation, when free medical care for government workers and industrial workers was introduced, the same strict demands have been maintained despite the immeasurably greater demand. Today, there are scientists and laboratories to keep check as well as the experienced and conscientious staff.

When the selected drug sources, mostly plants, arrive, they are carefully sorted and cleaned. Then whatever is unwanted is removed by hand, and the resulting raw drugs are steamed, dried or otherwise processed for storage. Tong-

Patent pills are wrapped before leaving the pharmacy.



Medicinal liquor is made here.





北京同仁堂



**Tongrentang  
Pharmaceutical  
Factory**

*Traditional Medicines      Choice ingredients  
Careful processing      High standards of purity*



Products available for export through:

China National Native Produce and Animal By-Products Import & Export Corp., Beijing Branch

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*Introducing...*

**Another Famous Chinese Liquor**

# *Meigueilu Jiu (Rose Liquor)*



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GOLDEN STAR BRAND

**玫瑰露酒**

**A white grain spirit flavored with the petals of roses**

China National Cereals, Oils & Foodstuffs Import & Export Corporation,  
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rentang's traditional standard of fineness for powders illustrates the constant striving for consistent therapeutic values even in the old days. The selected raw ingredients are cut, crushed and ground. The powder at the first sifting is passed through a sieve containing 8,100 meshes to the square inch with the requirement that every 500 grams must not leave more than 9 grams of residue. After further processing the residue must not be larger than 0.9 gram.

### Some Famous Drugs

In preparing one of the pharmacy's "ten famous drugs," Tiger Bone Wine, which contains 147 active constituents and is greatly sought as an alleviator of arthritic pains, 30 ingredients are first steeped in alcohol made from sorghum for ten minutes and then stored in a cool cellar for six months. Bones from a tiger are stewed over a slow fire for 88 hours, after which the gelatinous material obtained is mixed with the other ingredients, boiled for ten minutes, then put into earthen jars, sealed and stored for at least 12 months before use.

Niu Huang Qing Xin Wan, or Bezoar Antifebrile Pills, prepared according to a Qing dynasty court prescription, are especially recommended by Chinese traditional medical doctors for treating certain fevers, facial nerve disorders and dysphasia. Among its 13 active ingredients are ginseng root, bezoar and powdered antelope horn.

Ta Huo Lo Dan, or Large Pills for Vasomotor Ailments, are prescribed for difficulty in locomotion and backaches.

Shen Rong Wei Sheng Wan, or Ginseng and Deer Antler Pills, are used to treat debility, lassitude, vague aches in legs and loin, loss of appetite, amnesia and certain menstrual disorders and premature aging. This prescription containing 20 active ingredients was once a closely guarded family secret.

An Gong Niu Huang Wan, with musk, powdered Asian rhinoceros

horn and bezoar among its active ingredients, is recommended for coma with high fever, convulsions and cerebritis.

### Vastly Enlarged Clientele

After the country's liberation Tongrentang along with other private enterprises became at first a joint state-private and then a state-owned enterprise. The owner Yue Songsheng, a direct descendant of the founder, was retained as manager and elected deputy mayor of Beijing. The pharmacy, which in 1949 had approximately 200 employees and prepared and processed its drugs at the back of the shop, has grown until today it employs 1,600 people and produces 135 times as much (by value) as 30 years ago, while maintaining its high standards.

This progress was helped by the setting up of a research team in 1952 with the help of Beijing's mayor Peng Zhen. Professor Zheng Qidong of the faculty of pharmacology of the Beijing University was invited to direct research. This led to the establishment of an extracting plant of Tongrentang's two years later. Tongrentang's research laboratory analyzes, isolates, identifies, assays and concentrates the active ingredients of traditional medicines with the result that many have now appeared in ready-to-take tablet form instead of in bulk for home brewing as in the past. Tongrentang Pharmaceutical Plant outside the capital's Chong Wen gate is the largest in Beijing. And in suburban counties, Tongrentang has a bottled medicine plant, a medicinal plaster factory which is one of China's biggest and a farm that raises some animals, such as the deer, which provide ingredients for traditional drugs.

Machines have begun to replace the manual work in the preparation of Tongrentang's medical products. Electronic equipment weighs and dispenses some 400 of the more commonly used ingredients, saving much labor for the staff members who formerly had



A veteran pharmacist at the inquiries counter gives advice to a client.

photos by Zhang Jingde

to go repeatedly to high banks of tiny drawers, take out the required quantity of each ingredient, weigh it by hand, bring it on the makeup counter and then wrap up the compound. It also saves a lot of time in filling prescriptions.

Besides making its medicines available over the counter in most of China's pharmacies, Tongrentang runs a mail-order department. Last year it received 15,000 letters which were often requests for advice. In keeping with its tradition, the shop has two veteran pharmacists with a half a century of experience on duty right by the door to advise clients. China's traditional pharmacists are trained to diagnose and treat some ailments. As a doctor must know the properties of the medicinal agents he prescribes, the pharmacists must know something about the diseases.

Despite the fact that there are more doctors and hospitals, Chinese people still buy a lot of patent medicines. In the cities many resort, for minor and chronic complaints, to tried and tested remedies in which they have confidence. The practice of such self-treatment is still very alive in a population which so recently had very little access to professional medical care. Traditional medicines, moreover, are seldom drastic in action, very few are dangerous, none are toxic, and side-effects are rare. Besides, the pharmacist always tells the customer of any counter-indications. □

# The Painter Situ Qiao

## as I Knew Him

SHEN CONGWEN



I MET Situ Qiao in 1923, the year after I came to Beijing to enroll in Yenching University.

Fresh from the countryside and eager to learn, I sought the company of my fellow-students. My first acquaintance was Dong Jingtian (also known as Dong Qiusi). One day I came to his dormitory in the university (which in those days was situated near today's Beijing Railway Station), and there I met Situ Qiao. An old blue windbreaker with paint stains down its front was flung casually over his shoulders. He looked a bit like Haile Selassie, except that the emperor affected an air of pomp and majesty while Situ Qiao didn't care what he looked like at all, rather out of tune with the other Yenching students of that time, who wore Western-style suits and among whom those majoring in literature, in particular, tried to look like Byron. Some even kept stacks of stationery printed with the words "Poetry by So-and-so",

**SHEN CONGWEN**, noted novelist and industrial artist, now works as a researcher in the Institute of History of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

although they hadn't even started to write.

Situ Qiao invited me to his room to look at his paintings. Sketches and drawings were tacked to the walls, lay on the table and covered every available space. I had no training in art and did not presume to offer any comments. I was not much interested in still-lives, but his figure sketches fascinated me. All his characters were ordinary people, similar to those in my hometown and so vivid in my memory. They were dear to me because he was drawing exactly those I wanted to write about—the common "low" people. This first meeting left me with a very good impression. I liked his unaffected personality; I liked his pictures.

In 1926 the Northern Expeditionary Army was advancing victoriously and many of my university acquaintances went to Wuhan and Guangzhou to join the Great Revolution. I stayed for a time in Beijing to continue my precarious existence as a professional writer. I was just making some headway in my work and, when I was invited to Wuhan, I thought it would be better for me to go to Shanghai,

which I did. After cooperation between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang broke down in 1927 the situation in Wuhan turned bad. In 1928 and 1929 those of my acquaintances who survived the Kuomintang's massacre of Communists and progressives gradually gathered together in Shanghai. Situ Qiao came too, with many of his paintings.

In 1928 in an article entitled "Mr. Situ Qiao's Misfortune" I wrote: "In present China, there is not a single art that is not engaged in power struggles, hypocrisy, opportunism or trickery. Where is the place for honesty?"

"Devoid of prospects or of assistance, he spends his days doing practical work spurned by the 'astute' socialites. When he runs out of paints he washes out what's left in the squeezed-out tubes and he pawns any clothes he can spare to buy canvas. In spite of the difficulties he has created many good works. I am telling everybody about his apparent foolishness because if we believe a better era will come and hope it will come sooner, it would seem that more such fools are needed in the arts to meet requirements.

"A bit of understanding, recognition, and genuine sympathy arising from such understanding and recognition, a bit of happiness derived from them — these are enough to satisfy him."

At that time "artists" in Shanghai affected long hair, black Western-style suits and scarlet bowties; French styles were the vogue. And only those who knew the ropes and were agile socially got ahead. Situ Qiao's simple way of life didn't fit in with current fashions. But I admired his practical application rarely met with in those days and thus to be valued all the more. In my view literature as well as painting needed such simplicity, honesty, unpretentiousness and closeness to the common people, if they were to achieve the progress they should. My fondness for Situ Qiao grew into admiration.

In 1933 I came back to Beijing from Qingdao University and met Situ Qiao again. He had married and was living in Bingjiao Lane near the Shichahai Lake in the northern part of the city. After the great social upheavals our reunion was all the more dear to us. And of course I looked over his new creations. Although he had never had a quiet and settled life his painting had become more mature. A few days later he offered to make a portrait of me for a keepsake. For three and half days I sat for him in a corner of Beihai Park. He drew a half-length portrait about 70 centimeters high in gouache, which all my friends praised as a good likeness in both form and spirit. He himself was proud of it too. This was his fourth best portrait, he assured me, after those of Tagore and the Zhou brothers\*. I was touched by his enthusiasm.

After the Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge) Incident in 1937, which signalled the beginning of Japanese imperialism's all out war

against China, the Qinghua, Beijing and Nankai universities evacuated from north China to Kunming in Yunnan province, continuing as the Southwest Associated University. I went along, taking Situ Qiao's portrait of me. Only after the victory over Japan eight years later did I return with Beijing University. Situ Qiao came back, too, and bought a tiny studio at the foot of Xiangshan (Fragrant Hill) in the western suburbs. I and my family went to visit him. He had done a lot of work in the intervening decade. But what impressed me most was the fact that he still kept his frugal and diligent way of life. Seriously, without making any fuss about it, he lived among the common people as one of them, depicted the lowly and oppressed in their actual life and on their behalf voiced a

silent protest against the old society. I always admired his honesty and simplicity, a quality rare among the "artists" of that time.

After many sufferings and setbacks Situ Qiao finally found himself in the new China he had always longed to eulogize with his brush. Unfortunately, he died of an illness soon after. His attitude toward his work had always stimulated me and I am sure more people will want to learn from him. In his lifetime he neither rode high nor achieved great fame, yet he lives on in the memories of people who knew his worth. The portrait he drew of me disappeared during the turmoil of the cultural revolution but the impression he made on me from the very first has not faded and never will. □



Drawn in Illness

\* Zhou Shuren (Lu Xun) and his brother.

# Situ Qiao and His Works

WEN QING

SITU QIAO (1902-1958) was born in a poor family living in Kaiping county, Guangdong province. It was in Beijing in 1924 that he decided to make painting his life-long career. An annotation on a self-portrait in which he depicts himself smiling on one side of his face and weeping on the other reads: "Go on painting with tears in your eyes, you fool. Spend all your life in the prison of art."

Neither poverty nor poor health—he contracted tuberculosis at the age of 30—could deflect him from the path of his choice. He studied in Paris and the United States, taking part-time jobs to support himself. He came back home after the new China was founded. For the first time he saw the oppressed people he had so often described as masters of the country and saw overseas Chinese with half a lifetime of wandering behind them settled down comfortably. And he was happy. But in February 1958, before he could fulfil his wish to abundantly depict the new life around him, he died. On the evening before his death he was still working cheerfully on a painting about his native place, "Homebound Sails on Chishui River."



Soong Ching Ling

Three Overseas Chinese Laborers



In 1979, an exhibition of a 100-some paintings selected from his works was held in Beijing under the auspices of the Association of Chinese Artists.

The exhibits not only showed his skill in gouache, water colors and oils; they also breathed his sympathy for the down-trodden people and an indignant condemnation of the old society. "Put Down Your Whip" is an oil based on a street-corner play of the same name that played its part in mobilizing resistance to domestic oppression and foreign invasion in the 1930s. In the picture a poverty-stricken old minstrel tries to compel his young daughter to go on performing after she is exhausted. "Three Overseas Chinese Laborers" was done by Situ Qiao on his way home from the United States in August 1950. On shipboard he met three toilworn Chinese who had spent 48 years in the United States working for capitalist exploiters. Situ Qiao sketched them as he listened to their pathetic reminiscences.

The paintings shown included some of national minority people in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China, of landscapes in Guilin and on Hainan Island, and of the life, customs and scenery in the south China hometowns of overseas Chinese. The range of subject matter was broad, the workmanship serious and his style creative and unrestrained.

Many of Situ Qiao's works have also been published in album form. □



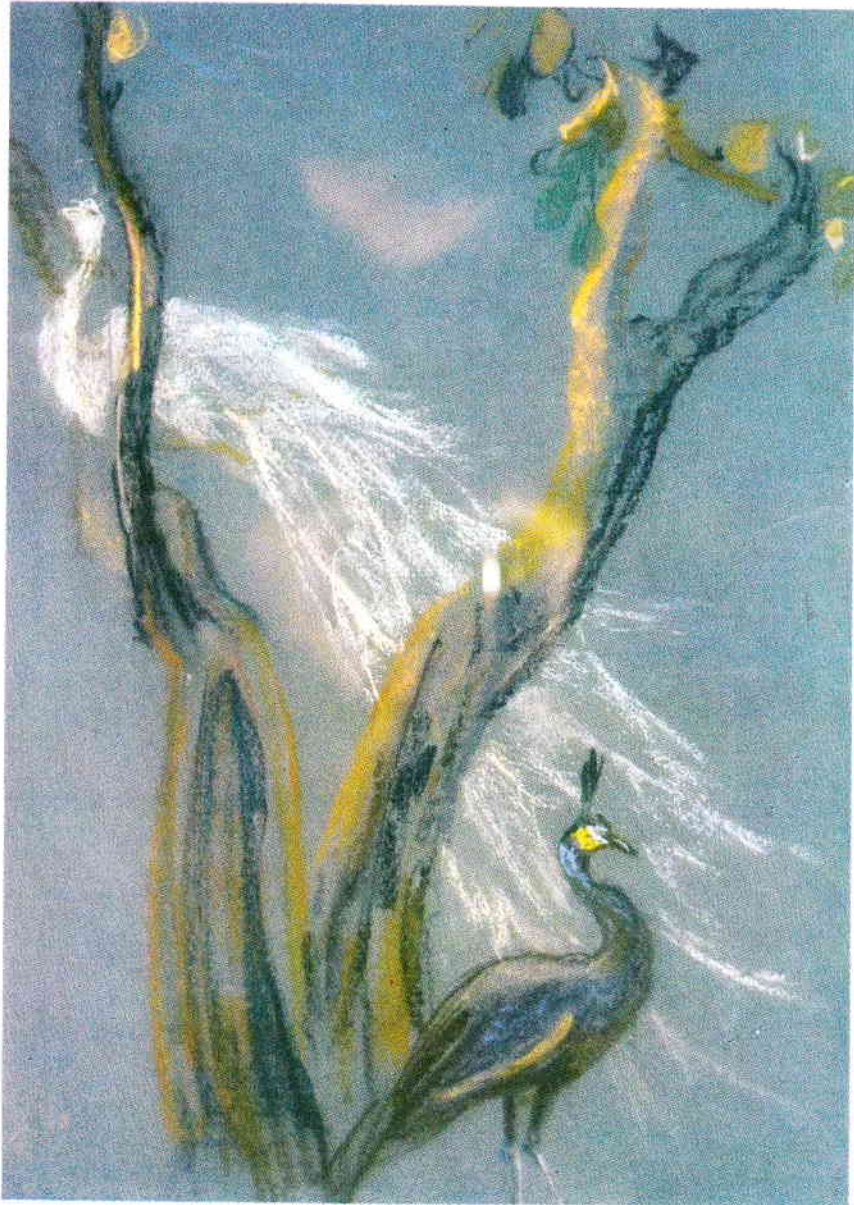


Playing on an Ancient Harp (1939)

Put Down Your Whip (1940)



Peacock





Pastures Under the Tianshan Mountains (1944)



My Wife Feng Yimei (1940)

*Editor's note: The author is a doctoral candidate in Asian Theater, specializing in Chinese drama, at the University of Hawaii. Since September 1979 she has been a graduate research student at Nanjing University on a fellowship from the Committee for Scholarly Exchange with the People's Republic of China. Below she describes the experience of studying and performing the traditional Beijing opera "The Drunken Beauty" in Nanjing.*



Elizabeth Wichmann as Lady Yang.

## First U.S. Woman in Beijing Opera

By ELIZABETH WICHMANN

SINCE my piece was only 40 minutes long, it was preceded by another short play. I waited backstage, suffering the most overpowering stage fright of my life. I wondered why I had ever had the audacity to think I could go on stage in China and respectably perform a Beijing opera made famous by the master actor Mei Lanfang.

As the applause for the first play died down, I could hear the audience murmur excitedly that the next one would be performed by a foreigner. Then the introductory music began. Eight students from the theater school who were playing attendants to my character, Yang Guifei, the favorite imperial concubine of the Tang dynasty Emperor Ming Huang, went on stage in procession, preparing the garden for her coming. I ran through every appropriate relaxation exercise I knew of, spoke sternly to my knees which were literally knocking, and began as best I knew how to walk in the stylized steps of an aristocratic young woman as portrayed in Beijing opera. When I came into the light and turned to face the audience, I hit what felt like a solid wall of applause, it was so sudden and so loud.

I knew that I was being applauded because I was a foreigner

expressing a serious interest in a traditional Chinese art form. This welcome encouraged me, and carried me to the position on stage where I was to begin my first set of dance movements and song. Then I began to sing—and was inundated by wave after wave of laughter.

I had heard Chinese audiences laugh at stage situations which to my Western theatrical sense seemed not to call for laughter, and as a student researching the aesthetics of Beijing opera had spent some time analyzing the phenomenon. But now every fiber of performer in me cringed in horror at this reception. Rather than run from the stage, I recalled my teacher Shen Xiaomei's words: "If you weren't good in your own way, if you couldn't creditably bring the play to life within the general form of Beijing opera, I wouldn't let you go on stage. You must trust me." I set out to tell the story of the play. Then I began to act.

In the first scene, Yang Guifei walks through the palace gardens in the moonlight, happily approaching the pavilion where the emperor has asked that she join him in drinking and feasting. As she walks, her anticipation makes everything she sees seem beautiful to her. However, when she arrives she is informed that the

emperor has gone to the quarters of another concubine instead. Hurt and jealous, she attempts to hide her feelings from her attendants, and drinks alone. Finally she becomes intoxicated, and is helped back to her own rooms. As I spoke and sang I found myself employing a time-honored Western acting technique—I used the hurt and anger which I, the actress, felt at the laughter of the audience to help portray Yang Guifei's emotional state. To my utter astonishment, the audience rose and clapped for several minutes when I had finished.

Afterwards, feeling like the proverbial neurotic puppy, I went backstage and asked my teacher. "Why did they clap and then laugh and then clap?" Her face melted into that rare expression of total understanding. "Oh, Elizabeth, they laughed because they were surprised! They never expected that you would evoke the spirit and flavor of Beijing opera. But you did! Now, the next time you perform..." and she proceeded to give me specific, technical performance directions.

### The Problems Involved

My difficulties with my first performance are typical of the sort of dilemmas which I, and the Chinese artists helping me, face in

the course of my research. This traditional theater form, more than 150 years old, uses an extensive "vocabulary" of speech, song, acting, dance, and acrobatic conventions. It is taught by the traditional method of imitation, rather than by explanation and theory. Beijing opera performers can pick up a newly written play script and, by drawing on training so comprehensive that the "vocabularies" have become second nature, can sing, gesture and dance at the first rehearsal although the script contains no musical notation nor stage directions. I need to acquire a fraction of this "second nature" understanding. And since the performance "vocabularies" are intended to elicit spontaneous reactions from an audience reacting on the basis of its own social and cultural values, I need to acquire a fairly intuitive understanding of those values as well. The process of learning to think and react from a new set of aesthetic, social and cultural values is similar to that of learning a new language. It is slow and time consuming, with few sudden breakthroughs. And it is dependent upon the understanding support of people who already "live in" those values.

When I arrived in Nanjing in September 1979, I hoped to become attached to a Beijing opera company, and through watching their training sessions, rehearsals and performances, to familiarize myself with the practice of Beijing opera. And I hoped to "try on" the performance "vocabularies" myself — to learn the most basic

patterns of speech, song and movement so as to have a personal, physical understanding of the art. Nanjing University has no theater department, and so could not provide these opportunities itself. But, through a complicated series of arrangements, the Jiangsu Provincial Beijing Opera Company accepted me into its working life.

### Unexpected Opportunity

A month later I received another opportunity, one which I had neither expected nor planned for. Nanjing University President Kuang Yaming suggested that, as it was the 50th anniversary of the American tour of Mei Lanfang, I learn and perform *Guifei Zui Jiu* (The Drunken Beauty), one of the plays which that master actor had presented in the U.S. He proposed that I be taught by the last student of Mei Lanfang — Shen Xiaomei, a teacher at the Provincial Theater School.

I was overwhelmed. This was a chance to view the form which I was researching from the inside, working with its performers instead of watching them work. But I had never performed in a foreign language, and had never acted in an Asian play for an Asian audience. I was terribly afraid that I would present a poor cartoon of the original, performing a disservice to the form and embarrassing myself. However, President Kuang stressed that since relations between the U.S. and China had only just been officially normalized, such a concrete piece

of cultural exchange, resonating with past cultural exchange, would be an appropriate contribution to the resumption of cultural relations. I decided to throw caution to the winds and try.

My first meeting with my teacher Shen Xiaomei was rather uncomfortable. She was used to teaching young native Chinese speakers who had been intensively studying the "vocabularies" of Beijing opera for several years. How was she to go about teaching a 29-year-old American woman, with no such background, to perform a full traditional play? As I watched her perform the piece for me, simply, without costume or makeup and humming the musical interludes herself, I experienced a growing terror. I felt I would need to watch her perform the play at least 1,000 times to learn the complex coordination of eye-hand-head-arm-torso-leg-foot that made up the units of the movement vocabulary. The songs and stylized speech presented an even greater problem. The melodic style still did not sound "natural" to me, and I could not find the resonating areas in my head which would produce the characteristic falsetto vocal quality. We discussed the problems, and decided to begin work on the movement first. At the same time, I would listen on my own to a tape of her singing and speech, slowly memorizing the melodic progressions. Later, we would attack the vocal quality.

In our next several sessions, Shen Xiaomei patiently taught me

Being made up in the costume room.



Practicing under Teacher Shen Xiaomei — famous Beijing Opera actress.





On stage with attendants, played by the Chinese drama students.

Photos by Zhang Jingde

the basic movement of the play — where to stand and when, how to get from one place to another, and the accompanying gestures. Later she introduced the relationship of the singing to the dance by singing to accompany my movement, all the while gently correcting my most glaring mistakes. I spent a great deal of time practicing the movement on my own, and found that I would often accustom my body to incorrect movement patterns. Several actresses suggested that I join them early each morning for their exercise sessions. As they worked out, I would stand behind them and imitate their movement. Afterwards they would watch me and correct the errors which they could see but I could not yet feel. At my twice-a-week lessons with Shen Xiaomei, I would then try to apply what I had learned to that point.

### Studied Stylized Speech

Our work on the stylized speech began with the traditional method of listen-and-repeat. When I was able to produce fairly accurate mechanical reproductions, I began to try to express feelings, and discovered that many of my instinctive expressions were inappropriate. Thereafter, this imita-

tion work included facial expressions as well, and I began to work on eye exercises each day so that I could go for extended periods without blinking — and without appearing to be in shock as a result.

I also began meeting with another teacher at the Provincial Traditional Theater School, Hu Zhongwu, a musician who teaches the *hu qin*, the 2 stringed instrument which provides the principal accompaniment. He would play and I would sing, first trying simply to match my melody to his. This was not easy since the *hu qin*'s accompaniment is frequently a melodic progression which complements rather than mirrors the vocal line. Hu Zhongwu also spent many hours patiently helping me search for the required vocal quality and painstakingly correcting my pronunciation.

About seven weeks after our first meeting, Shen Xiaomei asked me to combine the movement, speech and singing. As I sang about the beauty of two mandarin ducks swimming together in a stream, mimed leaning on a bridge railing with my left arm, and raised my right arm above my head to allow the long white sleeve to form a backdrop for my face, I turned my body to the left a bit

more than I should have. Instead of gently correcting me, Shen Xiaomei sharply told me to begin again, and to do it right. I felt a rush of pure joy. I knew that she thought there was a chance for me to do a creditable job, because she was now addressing me from within the traditional Beijing opera student-teacher relationship. There was no longer any remnant left of the distancing politeness extended to foreigners in China. I was simply her student.

### Rehearsal and Performance

The final week before the first performance is a frantic, colorful haze in my memory. The makeup specialist worked for hours on my face, trying to adapt the traditional makeup design, intended to enlarge the eyes and make the nose appear higher, to my already large eyes and nose. Her final result was much better than I had imagined possible. The costume mistress located a set of costumes long enough for me, and allowed me to spend several hours trying to accustom myself to moving in the stiff brocade. And she walked behind me when I first wore the heavy, tight headress, ready to catch me if I fainted. At the first



# Tangerines of Xuefeng

CHEN ZHENGWEN

The Xuefeng Hills, where Xuefeng tangerines grow.

WITH one third of the world's tangerine-growing areas, China is one of the largest producers of this fruit. Tangerines, or Mandarin oranges as they are sometimes called, are grown all along the Changjiang River valley and China's southern provinces. Among them, the Xuefeng (Snow Peak) tangerine is known both in China and abroad for its regular shape, glossy skin, seedless pulp and delightful taste. It is exported to Canada, Indonesia, the Soviet Union and other countries.

Its name derives from the Xuefeng Hills in Shaoyang prefecture, Hunan province where it is grown. With a mild climate, ample rainfall and rich soil, the region is ideal for growing oranges and tangerines, and local people have been doing so for more than 800 years. However, the original strain of tangerines raised here had seeds which made it unsuitable for canning. It was only in 1932 that a seedless variety was brought in from Wenzhou prefecture of

Zhejiang province. More than 40 years of breeding and selection have constantly improved its quality. And by 1979, seven counties in the area were growing it on a total of 14,200 hectares. The 15,200-ton harvest that year was the highest in the prefecture's history.

Credit for the rapid development of the Xuefeng tangerine should be given the staff of the citrus research institute set up in Shaoyang prefecture in 1973. With 61 technicians and 855 workers in charge of a 130-hectare experimental orchard and a processing

dress rehearsal, the other actors and the orchestra members seemed unsure about what to make of a foreigner performing Beijing opera. By the third, we were a cast working together. They offered suggestions and shielded me from reporters who wanted to interview me while I badly needed to work on the play.

On the day of the first performance, we had a final rehearsal, after which Shen Xiaomei sur-

prised me by bringing me supper. As I ate, she reminisced about her experiences with Mei Lanfang. Her stories created an island of calm, making me feel for the moment that I was actually becoming a small part of the performance tradition that is her life. Then the makeup specialist worked her magic, the costume mistress dressed me, the other performers embraced me, and all too suddenly the play began.

When it was over, performers from the Beijing opera company surrounded me and bore me off to an after-theater supper. And throughout the supper, they excitedly gave me specific criticisms. And as I cycled back to the university afterwards, it dawned on me that I must indeed have done something right. They had not simply said, "How nice, very good," which would assuredly have meant, "Oh dear, well, at



plant, the institute is charged with breeding improved varieties, studying methods of cultivation, management and storage, providing good saplings and training skilled personnel for the region. So far they have trained about 60,000 peasant technicians and skilled workers for local communes. By crossing a foreign species with a native plant in recent years, they have developed a new variety of tangerine that ripens in late September, 20 days earlier than other species, with a higher resistance to cold and yielding more and better fruit. The tree has been widely planted. New methods evolved include a high-grafting technique in which ordinary tangerine buds are grafted onto a citron stock 30 centimeters above the ground. Dwarfing and close planting are also used to improve cold-resistance and achieve precocity (earliness of bearing), higher yields, better fruit quality and lower production costs. Experiments have produced methods of making grafted trees bear fruit after only 3 to 5 years instead of 7 or 8 years as before.

The horticultural farm in Dongkou county has developed a pomelotangerine hybrid which bears fruit earlier than ordinary tangerine trees. The fruit has closely-spaced evenly-sized segments, crisp and delicious to the taste, and can be stored longer. This new hybrid is the work of Luo Luntiao, the farm's manager,

and already more than 30 specimens are growing well.

Among the 20 varieties of tangerines now grown in the area, half of them are new ones developed by the research institute, horticultural gardens and communes. Most of them have a sugar content of 11 percent; some as high as 16 percent.

Formerly, fluctuations from year to year in the trees' yields prevented local fruit growers from maintaining consistently high yields. Members of the research institute went afield to see what fruit growers elsewhere were doing to solve this problem. From what they learned they selected ways and means suited to conditions in Shaoyang. These consisted of wrapping the trees with a warm jacket of straw as well as manuring, loosening the soil and watering before cold weather set in. Such measures, coupled with prompt pest control and repeated and selective pruning during the year, have enabled local growers to get high yields every year since 1974.

Since 1971 Liu Lizhong, production sub-chief at the Shaoyang horticultural farm, has been experimenting on obtaining high yields from individual trees. Taking a 4.9-meter-high tree which had been planted in 1944 and was past its prime, he took meticulous care of it. By 1978 it had borne up to 263 kilograms of fruit annually, and in 1979, it yielded 3,621 tangerines, totalling 380 kilograms. □



Tangerine harvest.



Checking the sugar content at the Citrus Research Institute.

Photos by Wang Xinmin

least you tried." In the second performance at the theater school, and in the third which was held at the university, I tried hard to incorporate their comments.

#### An Evaluation

What I performed was of course not good Beijing opera. After seeing the videotape made, I hesitate to call all but one or two minutes of the show Beijing opera at all. But I am proud of it — it is much

more than I had thought I could do. There is actually one phrase of song in which the vocal quality, the movement, and the acting style somewhat resemble Shen Xiaomei's.

In a broader context, I see two real achievements. From what I have read in the Chinese and American press, and from the letters I have received from people in both countries, I believe that the combined efforts of Shen

Xiaomei, the theater school, the Beijing opera company, and the university did in fact make a contribution to cross-cultural understanding. And my own research has benefited appreciably. Beijing opera is no longer an exotic, foreign performing art to me. I do not pretend to fully understand it as yet, but the distance of unfamiliarity is gone. I now have a foundation upon which to build. □

# Philately in China

ZHAO WENYI

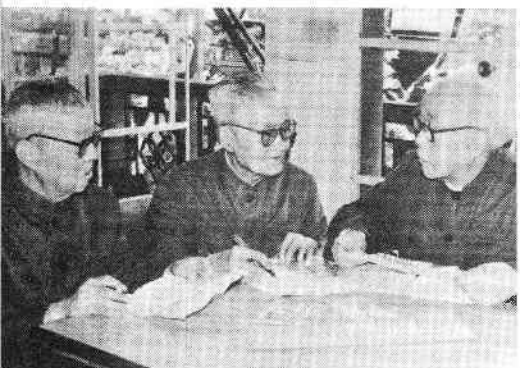
ALMOST any day of the week, clusters of people engaged in animated discussion can be seen in front of the China National Stamp Corporation in downtown Beijing. They are enthusiasts of the newly-revived pastime of stamp collecting, which has a long history in China but had virtually disappeared during the cultural revolution.

Organized philatelic activities began to develop in China some 60 years ago. The first philatelic organization in the country, the Divine Land Stamp Research Society of Shanghai, was established in 1922. The Chinese Philatelic Society was set up in the same city in 1925. Both organizations published journals.

Also in 1925, the New Light Philatelic Society came into being in Hangzhou. At one time it had as many as 5,000 members and published two periodicals. The 1934 Philatelic Society was founded in Zhengzhou in the year named and also started a journal.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications established the

Veteran philatelists Ma Renquan (Ma Ren Chuen) (right), Zhao Shanchang (K. Y. Chao) (center) and Sun Junyi (John T. H. Sun).



Certificate of membership and seal of Chinese Philatelic Society set up in 1925.

China Philatelic Company to boost stamp collecting, and in 1955 began to put out the magazine *Chinese Philatelic Journal*.

Philately was condemned during the cultural revolution as a "leisurely and carefree hobby of the bourgeoisie," and even exchanging of stamps through correspondence was bracketed with espionage. Stamp collectors were attacked and some philatelists imprisoned. The *Chinese Philatelic Journal* had to suspend publication, and the export of Chinese stamps to foreign collectors stopped too.

At the Exhibition of Stamps of the People's Republic of China in Hongkong in November 1979.



ONLY after the fall of the gang of four in late 1976 did philately begin to flourish again. Philatelic organizations have been founded or re-established since then in many cities, including Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Nanjing, Changsha and Wuxi. Groups have been set up in some counties as well, such as Boxian county in Anhui province and Shunde county in Guangdong province. These associations frequently hold local exhibitions or lectures on stamp collecting.

While the most noted philatelists in China are elderly people who have built up stamp collections over many years, growing numbers

ZHAO WENYI is an editor of the "Chinese Philatelic Journal."



Certificate of merit won by China's "1934 Philatelic Society Monthly" at the International Stamp Exhibition in Brussels in 1935.

of young people are taking up the hobby. One children's cultural palace in Shanghai has a group of 50 youngsters in an after-school philately class.

One of China's best-known philatelists was the late Jiang Zhifang (1907-1980), who for 60 years collected Chinese stamps only. He entered international stamp exhibitions in Brussels, Lisbon and Moscow, winning several medals. His rich memoirs, "60 Years of Stamp Collecting", were carried in several installments in a magazine *Xiangjiang Literature* published in China's Hunan province, and in Hongkong and Japanese magazines simultaneously last year.

Other veteran collectors include the 70-year-old founder of the 1934 Philatelic Society, Zhao Shanchang (K. Y. Chao), who often writes articles on the subject for magazines; 78-year-old Wang Jize, who had done a great deal of research on early Chinese stamps; and 76-year-old Ma Renquan (Ma Ren Chuen), author of "Ma's Illustrated Catalogue of the Stamps of China," which won a silver medal in a 1957 international exhibition in Moscow.

Shen Zenghua, 56, began stamp collecting as a middle school student. As a soldier in the Chinese New Fourth Army during the War of Resistance Against Japan, he continued to collect stamps, es-

pecially those released in the liberated areas.

The well-known Chinese writers Xia Yan and Ba Jin are avid philatelists.

**T**HE China National Stamp Corporation has extended its operations to more than 20 big and middle-sized cities. Its branches sell individual stamps, collections, albums and other items connected with philately to customers at home and abroad. Chinese stamps are now exported to more than 80 foreign countries and regions.

The corporation held a major exhibit of stamps of the People's Republic of China in Hongkong last year. It lasted a fortnight and drew some 130,000 visitors. Another exhibit at the National Art Gallery in Beijing, held in March this year, displayed stamps from the days of the Qing dynasty (China's first stamp was issued in 1878), stamps issued in China's liberated areas in the 1930s and 1940s, and the stamps of new China since 1949.

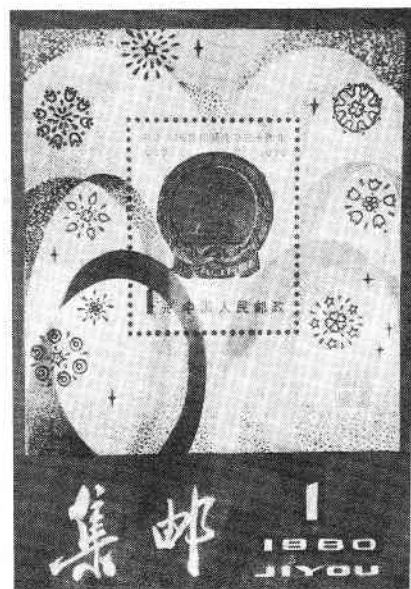
The national stamp-collectors' magazine, *Chinese Philatelic Journal*, resumed publication in January this year. In March and April, it conducted a poll involving some 60,000 philatelists in China as well as some abroad, to select the best stamps of the 30 years of the People's Republic of China.

Among those judged the best were fourteen sets of commemorative stamps, fourteen sets of special stamps and two sets of ordinary stamps. Three other sets won special awards.

Chinese newspapers and magazines, radio and television and film studios devote more attention to philately than ever before.

Two documentary films on the subject, "Chinese Stamps" and "Stamp Collecting", have been made in the past two years. □

Front cover of the January 1980 issue of the "Chinese Philatelic Journal" with which it resumed publication, with a picture of the "National Emblem" commemorative souvenir sheet.



# The Day Lily Comes Back Home

LONG YAYI

**E**ARLY this summer visitors to the Beijing Botanical Garden were attracted by some magnificent, many-colored flowers growing in experimental beds there. These were day lilies grown from 100 seeds sent to China five years ago by the late professor Lawrence Arguimbau who taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Prof. Arguimbau wrote to a Chinese friend in 1974 that he was suffering from an advanced kidney disease. This limited his physical activities, but he still amused himself in hybridizing tetraploid day lilies (day lilies with four times the ordinary

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**LONG YAYI is on the research staff of the Beijing Botanical Garden attached to the Botanical Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.**

The author does artificial pollination on day lilies.



number of chromosomes). Since day lilies mostly originated in China, he said, he would be happy to see the modern tetraploid plants developed in his country blossoming in China.

## An Ancient Chinese Flower

The day lily has long been known to the Chinese people. A passage describing this plant is found in the *Book of Songs*, a Chinese classic written more than 2,500 years ago. Ancient Chinese poets lauded its beauty and claimed that it made people forget their sorrows. Of the 15 kinds of day lilies known to exist in the world most have been found in China. They are cultivated in both north and south China, or grow wild in places with damp soil.

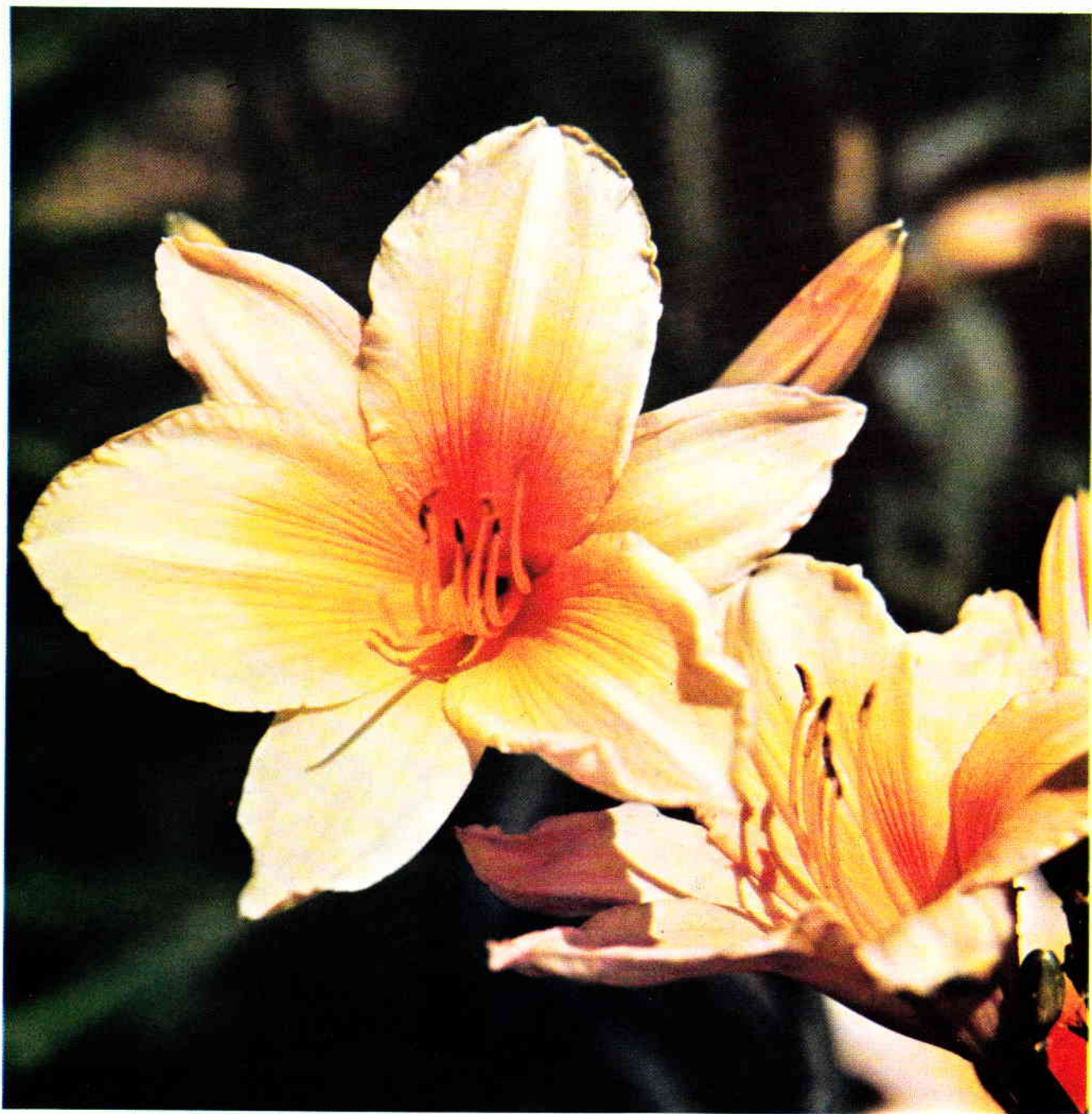
They are also well known to the Chinese people as a gourmet food, for the tender buds make excellent eating. One variety, the *Huanghuacai*, or literally "yellow flower vegetable," has been cultivated for several hundred years in Hunan, Jiangsu, Gansu and other provinces. The steamed and dried buds, sometimes called "golden needles" because of their appearance, give a special flavor to cooked dishes and soups. They are one of China's traditional exports.

The plant itself is a perennial of the lily family. Its spindle-shaped root stalk, or rhizome, tapers off in a stem about 0.7 meter long. Its leaves are long and narrow and ridged on the reverse side. The day lily has a flowering period that begins in March and lasts until late autumn. Each stem is topped by one or several flowers. Orange or lemon-colored, they are funnel-shaped and some give off a sweet fragrance. Propagation takes place by means of seeds, or by division of the plant in autumn.

## Abroad and Back

Chinese day lilies were taken to Europe in the Middle Ages, and from there to the Americas. Early in the present century an American botanist Dr. A. B. Stout stated his opinion that China's wild-growing double-flowered day lily was the best species yet discovered. He collected the seeds of species growing in China and cultivated new varieties by cross-breeding. On the basis of the experience gained in obtaining polyploids through chemical treatment American botanists in the 1950s succeeded in breeding polyploid day lilies with stronger stems and leaves, bigger and more beautiful flowers, and better adaptability to different environments. Day lilies have in recent years become one of the main ornamental flowers in European and American gardens, especially the latter.

Prof. Arguimbau's expressed hope that the flowers would flourish in China, their land of



3.



1.



2.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



## China after 35 Years

China and my friends from China have always been special to me. The two years I spent in China (1943-1945) as a young man in the U.S. Army Air Corps brought me into contact with many Chinese and gave me insight into the desperate conditions and the sufferings of the Chinese people since the previous century. Still, they faced their problems with dignity, courage and cheerfulness. How could a person not be impressed by such a people?

Mostly I want to say how much I have been impressed by the changes in your magazine over the past few years. The meaningful content of the articles has increased markedly. An excellent variety of subjects is now offered. Obviously your staff works hard and intelligently to provide a window through which the rest of the world can view the remarkable and heartwarming changes taking place in China.

Each time I read your magazine, I see the great differences between now and 35 years ago, and I think of what the changes mean to the individual human beings. China may still be poor, but the improvement has been great. China is rich in that most valuable resource, human spirit. And it just may be that China is now evolving a society better suited to the energy-resource future of the world.

F. W. Dickson

Oak Ridge, U.S.A.

## On Liu Shaoqi

Liu Shaoqi was indeed a great man like most progressive liberators. He was subjected to character assassination and blacklisted. However, we should not forget that "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." Indeed, finally the truth about Liu Shaoqi came to surface and the masses now all acknowledge the great contribution

that this man made to his race, nation and country.

The gang of four and Lin Biao did a number of negative and retrogressive activities to give the false image of the people's struggle in China. However, such evil led the people to be aware of their malicious activities and the people united and destroyed the evil few. It is therefore our duty and capability to take advantage of any disadvantage and turn it to our advantage.

We can apply this principle in various circumstances. We should learn from both present and past comrades who have dedicated their lives to contribute to the struggle and to man's complete freedom and happiness.

H. N. Mgulo

Ostersund, Sweden

## Want More on Religion

Congratulations on the article "In a Catholic Church in Beijing" in the January 1980 issue. I would like to see more articles about religion in China.

José Gorardo Garcia Mora

San Jose, Costa Rica

I have been reading your periodicals from a friend who is a subscriber and I have grown to like almost all topics you treat in them. It seems you hardly talk on religious matters. I would like you to indicate types of religious denominations prevailing in China and the state attitude towards them.

Owusu-Agyemang R. K.

Dormaa Ahenkro, Ghana

Since the beginning of this year our magazine has carried several articles on the subject covering China's religions in general (May), Catholics (January), Buddhism (July), Islam (August) and in this issue one by Prof. K.H. Ting, a bishop of the Chinese Protestant Church. We'd like your opinions on them. — Editor.

## Suggests Article about Philately in China

All the members of China Philatelic Society of Sydney enjoy reading your magazine and, of course, particularly the section "Stamps of New China".

Would it be possible for you to run an article on the subject of philately in China. Are there any philatelic societies in China? Are there any famous stamp collections in China? How many philatelists are there? Do they display their collections publicly? Could we have an article on China stamp designers?

Martin Smith

Kings Cross, Australia

In response to readers' requests we carry an article entitled "Philately in China" in this issue. — Editor.

## Shares CR with Children

We have certainly enjoyed *China Reconstructs* as we prepare for our third trip to China in October of 1980. It is hard to give suggestions for improvement. The photography is beautiful. We especially liked the article on Qufu as we will be visiting there and also look forward some day to taking the cruise on the Yangtze River. We enjoy the articles about history and about individuals and their contributions.

Recently we had an art fair at our school and the theme was the year 2000. We enjoyed Yu Feng's article, "The Year 2000 in Children's Minds" in the June issue — children's art is so delightful and universal.

I share your magazine with friends and recently used it to talk to the sixth grade at my children's school. The children are very interested in China and have a great deal to learn. I spoke to four classes and they wanted to go on asking questions long after the hour was finished.

Angus Dun

San Anselmo, U.S.A.

## Really Modernizing

In the February 1980 issue, I find "Protecting the Environment" very interesting. In Burma also we are trying our level best to promote our environment. "The Berlin Orchestra and von Karajan Acclaimed" and "Performance from Abroad Brought Cultural Springtime in Autumn" show that modern China is really modernizing.

U Saw Naing

Pantanaw, Burma

origin, has now come true. Polyploid day lilies raised from his seeds are now growing well in Beijing. Many have new, charming names given them by Chinese botanists.

Among them are the coy and delicate "With a Smile" (fig. 1);

the modest but elegant "Peace" with its heavy fragrance in the evenings (fig. 2); "Yellow Hibiscus" (fig. 3); "Golden Lotus" (fig. 4); "Azalea" (fig. 5); "Great Violet" (fig. 6); "Purple Margined Velvet" (fig. 7) and "Rosy Clouds" (fig. 8).

Some of these flowers are quite large, with diameters of up to 18-19 cm. and stems bearing as many as 57 blossoms. Propagation of these day lilies is being speeded up, and they will soon grace parks and gardens in many parts of China. □



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# A Family in the Academic Tradition

TAN AIQING

LI Heng, 83-year-old director of the Shanghai Observatory and his wife Luo Yujun, a retired professor of Chinese literature, from the East China Teachers' College, occupy the second floor of a small house fronted by a garden in the western part of Shanghai. All the other members of the family — son and daughter, son-in-law and daughter-in-law — are scientists.

"Our family has several of the faculties of a university — literature, engineering, chemistry, physics and medicine," Professor Luo jokes. Daughter Li Xiaoyu, 47, is a graduate in pediatrics and has been with the Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica for some twenty years. Her present research on the immunological action of certain herbal drugs used in Chinese traditional medicine has earned her a two-year fellowship at the Max-Planck Institute of Experimental Materia Medica in Göttingen, West Germany.

Her husband Qi Ruyun, who holds a doctorate in chemistry from a British university, is a vice director of her institute. He heads a laboratory doing research on the application of quantum chemistry in regards to drugs.

Son Li Yanjun does optical information processing research and teaches in Zhejiang University. His wife is a technician in the institute.

The mother, Luo Yujun, since retiring from her professorship in 1965, has been doing translations from French into Chinese. Over the Spring Festival this year the entire family met to celebrate the publication of her Chinese trans-

lation of Stendhal's *Scarlet and Black* in an edition of 560,000 copies. An earlier edition, of 160,000 copies, was sold out in July last year.

## Teacher and Pupil

As for Professor Li Heng the father, if it were not for some difficulty in moving his right arm and leg, the legacy of a cerebral thrombosis several years ago, people would hardly believe he is in his eighties. His energy, high spirits and general air of good health belie his years. His wife is short, comfortably plump and always smiling. "We were ardent and loving when we were young. Now we are very good and old friends. Can't imagine life without the other, could we?" he said to his wife, who smiles agreement. They will be celebrating their golden wedding anniversary two years from now. Having shared both joy and severe trials and sorrows they are now looking forward to more years of happiness.

Both are natives of Sichuan province where Li Heng taught Luo Yujun English and mathematics when she was in middle school. That was before Li Heng went to Paris in 1925 to major in astronomy. By happy coincidence, he ran into his former pupil who was majoring in French literature at the Sorbonne. She had broken with fettering feudal family ties when she was twenty and had made her way alone to France to study.

Li was her senior by ten years but they had much in common, including the desire to study and master their own respective fields. Their attraction was mutual.

During her student days in Paris Luo Yujun had the happi-

ness of seeing and hearing many times Madame Curie, the great woman physicist whose unbending will and devotion to science she admired immensely. Once, at a lecture, Luo Yujun managed to get a seat right up in front to be closer to see and hear that famous scientist. At recess she went to ask for an autograph from Madame Curie who signed her name on the student's card and which the Chinese girl lovingly kept, a constant reminder to always be like her heroine, as dauntless, humane and upright.

In 1933, the couple had both earned their doctorates and, together with their five-month-old daughter, boarded a ship for home to China.

They first taught at Shandong University in Qingdao, then joined Sichuan University and later the West China Union University. In 1950 a few months after China's liberation Guo Moruo, head of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, invited Li Heng to join the Shanghai (formerly Zikawei) Observatory where a century of astronomical records in French awaited study and collation. "I'll take that post," said Li, delighted to be of service to the young people's republic. The whole family moved to Shanghai, where Luo Yujun taught literature in the East China Teachers' College.

## Husband and Wife Team

Li Heng has written many works on astronomy and translated many others into Chinese. Among his works running into five million characters, are *General Astrophysics* and *Popular Astronomy*.

TAN AIQING is a staff reporter of China Reconstructs.



Li Heng, astronomer.

Professor Luo, after her retirement, despite high blood pressure and heart trouble, did not let the days pass without doing something useful. She continued her work of translating French literature into Chinese. She had finished Stendhal's *Scarlet and Black*, Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea* and Maupassant's *Our Heart* and several works of George Sand before the cultural revolution disrupted such work, and her life in 1966. In her work, she found her husband quite helpful. In her husband's translation of *A Brief History of Astronomy*, there is also an acknowledgement, "Texts compared by Luo Yujun." Actually many of their translated works are joint efforts to some extent. For example, when Luo Yujun was working on the translation of *Scarlet and Black*, her husband was her indefatigable assistant, checking and looking up references and offering advice and suggestions. In their collaboration, the husband and wife, scientist and artist, would sometimes argue heatedly over a point in translation, even fight furiously over a word, and in the end reach a more lucid and accurate understanding. In general, however, the husband and wife team works without friction.

#### The Teacher at Home

Of her daughter Xiaoyu and son Yanjun, Luo Yujun says: "They are fine children, doing useful

work for the country." Her voice and the look in her eyes leave no doubt that she is very proud of the children she and her husband have brought up.

Both are busy scientists now but they preserve the love for literature their parents, particularly their mother, awakened in them in their childhood. They had learned to appreciate Shakespeare at an early age, along with the works of great writers of their own country. They love their work, but find it relaxing and refreshing to read the literature of the West and the East. Xiaoyu loves music, and, according to herself, is a "mediocre" pianist, she says, but others say she plays very well. Her brother finds pleasure after work in translating

foreign literature into Chinese. He has been translating some of John Galsworthy recently, with the able help of his mother.

Both were star pupils at school. When Xiaoyu was in her second year at the Shanghai No. 1 Medical College, the brilliant record there resulted in her election as a delegate to the Shanghai People's Congress. Neither married until they were in their thirties. "Too busy with their studies," explains their mother, who worried more about their studies and character development than about their personal lives. "I went through primary, middle school and college again, with them," recalls Professor Luo with a chuckle. She was a teacher first and then a mother. Even today the parents take a

Three generations of the family.



keen interest in their children's work and progress, sharing some of their worries, failures and successes.

Luo Yujun is the only one in the family wholly engaged in literature and not science. But she does not feel left out.

"I am the old granny of the family, but that is not the only tie I have with my children (among whom she includes her son-in-law and daughter-in-law). They are all intensely interested in my translation work. This is our common interest and common language. Often we sit down together and discuss characters in novels and techniques of translation. My work and I are strong cement holding the family together," says Professor Luo.

The elderly couple lead a regular life, following a regime they have prescribed for themselves. In the mornings they either read or write. "Knowledge must be constantly replenished. We must always learn and learn," says Luo Yujun. In the afternoons Li Heng goes out for a bit of fresh air. On Sundays Xiaoyu and her husband bring their five-year-old daughter to visit the grandparents and to enjoy some dishes prepared by their mother. But on festivals, the whole family meet in the second-story home of the grandparents and have a happy get-together. On these occasions the grandmother is kept very busy in the kitchen, forgetting her translations to concentrate on the dishes everyone looks forward to. She insists on doing the cooking despite her years and the fact that she has someone coming in every day to help with the housework.

### After the Long Bleak Years

When the gang of four was around, learning was a crime and ignorance was something to crow about. This intellectual couple were not spared their share of the humiliation and abuse. Li Heng was pilloried and hounded as a "reactionary academic authority". Luo Yujun was publicly humili-



Wife Luo Yujun (left), famed translator, and daughter, Li Xiaoyu, medical scientist.  
Photos by Zhong Xiangdong

liated and made to suffer fearful persecution for being the translator of *Scarlet and Black* which itself was condemned as a "big poisonous weed". The couple's residence was raided and ransacked by successive gangs of hoodlums. The old people were driven to utter despair. What was most heart-breaking to Luo Yujun was that the suitcase filled with her manuscripts accumulated through the years was lost during the ransacking. But despite all this, their spirit never broke. The children comforted their aged parents as best they could. Luo Yujun says she kept her sanity recalling and reciting classical Chinese poems she had learnt as a child.

The tremendous changes that have taken place in the last three years have of course been reflected in this family. In 1978 Li Heng was invited to attend the National Science Conference in Beijing. After long bleak black years the Li family once again felt that they were wanted and useful, and they had contributions to make. The elderly couple went back to translating and writing. Luo Yujun has just finished her translation of Dumas's *The Knight of the Red*

*House* which the Sichuan People's Publishing House is bringing out. Their children are again busy. Yachun has completed eleven papers on optics and electronics.

Li Heng is now chairman of the Astronomical Association of Shanghai, advisor to the Shanghai Union of Writers for the Diffusion of Scientific Knowledge and a member of the Shanghai People's Political Consultative Conference. He still frequently gives talks to young astronomy enthusiasts at the Children's Palace of the China Welfare Institute. Luo Yujun is a member of the Writers' Association of Shanghai and active in her work of the Shanghai Women's Federation. Last year, on International Women's Day, she was awarded a special honor for her work in bringing fine foreign literary works to the people. At the Spring Festival tea party given by the Shanghai People's Political Consultative Conference for well-known personages in the city, Luo Yujun was asked to address the meeting, she said, "I'll never put down my pen till I die," reaffirming her belief in the power of learning and issuing a challenge to the younger generation. □

# Ming Dynasty

## 2—Foreign Relations

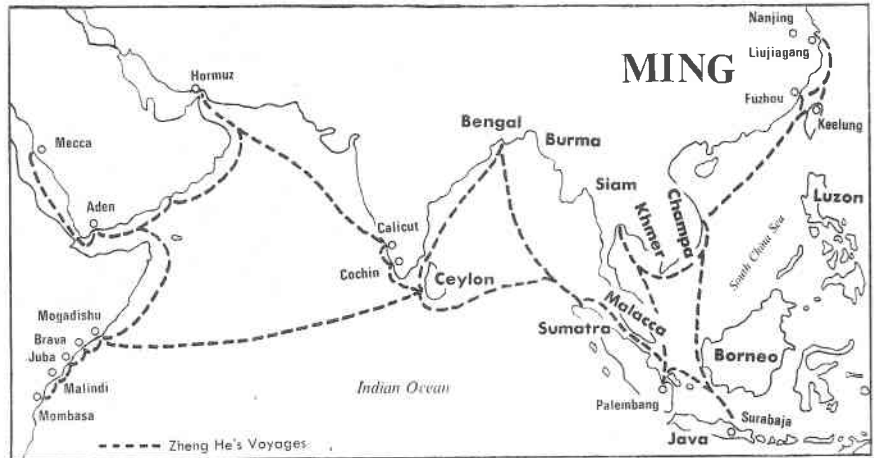
JIAO JIAN

**I**N the first half of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) China was known in the world as a rich and powerful country. She received envoys and trade missions from many lands and extended her foreign contacts through a series of sea voyages extending from the coast of southeast Asia to the Indian Ocean and the coast of Africa.

In 1405 the Ming Emperor Cheng Zu mounted a huge sea expedition under the leadership of the court eunuch Admiral Zheng He (1371-1435), a Muslim from Yunnan province. Traveling with him were 27,800 people including sailors, soldiers, interpreters, merchants, artisans and doctors in 62 big seagoing ships. The biggest, 140 meters long and 60 meters wide with 12 sails and manned by about 300 seamen, could accommodate a thousand people. Laden with gold, silver, silk, porcelain, ironware and cotton cloth, the ships set out from Jiangsu province.

In the 30 years that followed, Zheng He made seven expeditions to Indo-China, the Malay archipelago, Bengal, India, Iran, Arabia and the coast of the Red Sea and east Africa.

Zheng He and his retinue were warmly received in every country. He paid his respects to local kings and presented gifts. After that came trade with officials or merchants. Chinese goods were much desired, especially the silks and blue-and-white porcelain bowls and saucers, which were exchanged for precious stones, pearls, coral and spices. With the permission of the king of Malacca Zheng He built a storehouse on the Malay peninsula. Ships of Zheng He's fleet that had been to other lands would assemble there and sort out and pack the goods before sailing



homeward in May when a southerly wind prevailed.

Often foreign kings or their envoys would come back with the ships to China, bringing ostriches, lions, zebras, giraffes and other exotic gifts for the Ming emperor. They were hospitably received at the court and given presents in return, and arrangements were made for their homeward travel on the next voyage of Zheng He's fleet.

Zheng He's voyages predated by half a century those of the famous late 15th-century European navigators—of the Portuguese Vasco da Gama to India and around the Cape of Good Hope and of Columbus to America. Zheng He and his companions gathered much information on sea routes and on foreign lands, broadened economic and cultural exchanges and created early friendships for China with the visited states in Asia and Africa.

### Overseas Chinese

Even before the Tang dynasty (618-907) Chinese had crossed the seas to make a living in southeast Asia. By Zheng He's time there were fairly big Chinese commu-

nities in Indo-China, Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan and Luzon, and more were to follow. By the late Ming dynasty there were 30-40,000 overseas Chinese in Luzon and 20-30,000 in Java. They got along well with the local people, and through their labor made a contribution to the economy and culture of those countries. Some opened up land to plant sugarcane, pepper, tea and rice, while others operated gold or tin mines or practiced medicine.

### Fighting Japanese Pirates

Soldiers, merchants and pirates hired by feudal lords on the Japanese island of Kyushu had begun pillaging the Chinese coast in the last years of the preceding Yuan dynasty. In gangs ranging from a few dozens to hundreds, in big armed ships, they passed themselves off as traders, but actually they plundered—and often burned and killed.

The early Ming government put up a strong defence against these pirates and as a result the raids subsided. But in the middle of the dynasty these efforts slacked off and piracy grew once again. To

make things worse, big Chinese landlords and merchants in Fujian and Zhejiang provinces connived with the pirates, dividing the spoils. The people along the south-east coasts suffered enormous losses in property and lives.

In 1533, prompted by these Chinese merchants, several hundred Japanese pirate ships raided coastal areas in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. Some penetrated as far in as Nanjing and Anhui province, killing and burning and carrying off a hundred boatloads of booty.

The furious local people, on their own initiative, organized armed forces for their defence. The Ming government, too, mustered troops to suppress the raiders. Appointed commanding officer in eastern Zhejiang province was Qi Jiguang (1528-1587), then only in his twenties. He built up a well-trained, strictly disciplined army of 3,000, personally selected from among the local peasants and miners. He made it a rule that his men must push on forward even if there was sea or fire ahead; and retreat on signal even if there was gold and silver in front of them. This crack army was expanded to 20,000.

In 1561, with popular support, Qi Jiguang's army routed the Jap-



A blockhouse to guard against Japanese pirates built between 1522 and 1566 outside Quanzhou in Fujian province.

anese pirates from Zhejiang in nine successful battles. Then it moved into Fujian and Guangdong provinces to join forces with another army. By 1565 the Japanese pirates along China's south-east coast were essentially eliminated.

#### Aid to Korea

In 1592 the Japanese general Hideyoshi Toyotomi sent an army of 200,000 on hundreds of vessels to invade Korea as a springboard for attacking China. They landed at Pusan on the southern Korean coast, then advanced to capture

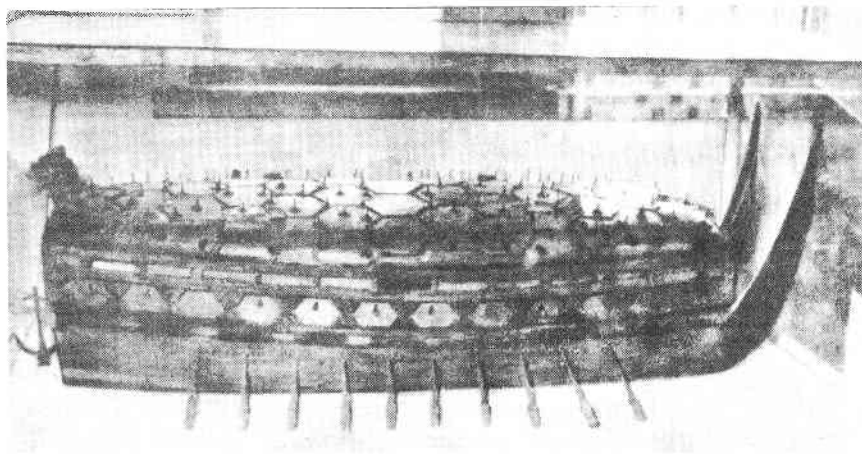
Pyongyang and Seoul. The Korean people rose up in arms.

The following year the Ming general Li Rusong led an army to Korea in answer to an appeal from its government. Together with the Korean army it defeated the invaders and recovered Pyongyang and Seoul. In 1597 Hideyoshi returned with 140,000 men. The combined Ming and Korean forces once more pressed them back to Pusan. Hideyoshi's death the year after and internal conflicts in the Japanese government brought about their hasty withdrawal. □



Bronze cannon used by the Ming dynasty in defense of its northern frontiers.

Model of a battleship designed by a Korean general to fight the Japanese invasion of that country.



The sword of General Qi Jiguang, who for a time got rid of the Japanese pirates.



Inside the Museum of Qin Shi Huang's Tomb.

# Historic Guanzhong Plain

SHI NIANHAI

THE Guanzhong Plain, a narrow strip of land surrounding the eastward turn or "elbow" of the Huanghe (Yellow) River and several of its tributaries in Shaanxi province, has been a focal point in China's history through the ages. It was the home of one of China's earliest types of human being, Lantian Man (*Sinanthropus Lantienensis*) 600,000 years ago. In its mountain-ringed security 11 feudal dynasties made their capitals. And, traversed by one of the few east-west travel routes across China, it was the beginning of the Old Silk Road.

The plain, 300 km. long from east to west and ranging from 30 to 80 kilometers wide, is bordered on the south by the Qinling Mountains, one of China's most famous ranges averaging over 2,000 meters above sea level. On the west are

the Longshan Mountains, lower but with precipitous cliffs and deep valleys that provide a natural defence for the area. The Beishan range on the north is another rampart.

## East of the Pass

Were it not for the valley of the Huanghe opening to the east, the plain and the two rivers, the Weihe and the Jinghe would be almost completely locked in. Two thousand years ago in the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.) the area was controlled by the State of Qin, then one of the seven states. As a protection against eastern neighbors, the Duke of Qin fortified Hanguan Pass at the eastern end of the plain, today in Henan province. The area west of the pass and accessible through it became known as Guanzhong — which means "center of the pass".

Though the mountains were a barrier, the ancient people made

a route to the west along the valleys and lower mountains. One of the marvels of the ancient world was the plank road along the cliffs of the Qinling Mountains dating from the Warring States period. It was made by thrusting beams into holes cut in the cliff. The walkway cantilevered over the cliff was covered with boards. Sometimes, if the valley was not too deep, there were support pillars from the valley floor. Both pedestrians and vehicles passed along this road. Remnants of it can still be seen today.

The largest tributary of the Huanghe River, the 878-km.-long Weihe (Wei River) flows eastward across the plain. With its tributaries, the Jinghe and Luohe rivers, it is the basis of an irrigation network which has been a boon to the plain since ancient times.

Along the rivers the plain is cut up by erosion into large flood plain terraces. The biggest, on the north

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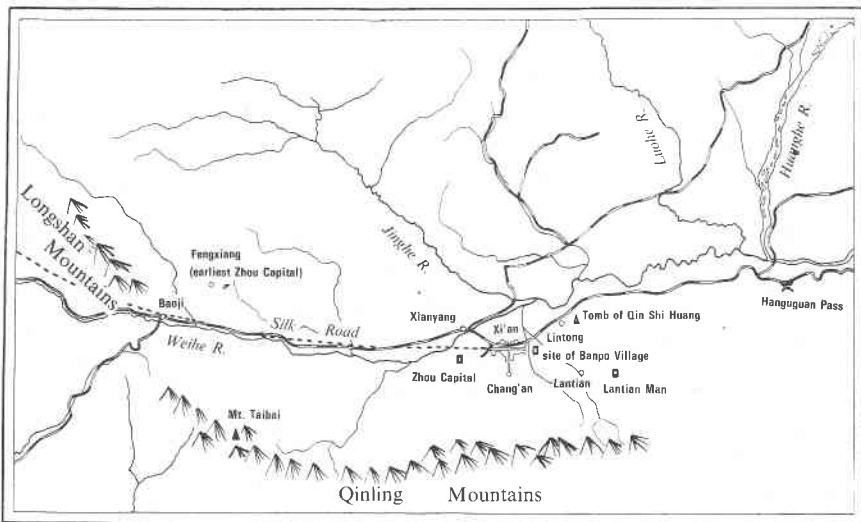
bank of the Weihe in the western part of the Guanzhong area, covers seven counties or 1,400 square kilometers.

### Home of Primitive Man

In the loess soil have been found the remains of the Lantian Man dating from 600,000 years ago — older than either Peking Man or Java Man. These finds from the Paleolithic period were uncovered in 1963-64 in Lantian county, 43 kilometers southeast of Xi'an, biggest city of the plain. At the time Lantian Man dwelt on it, the plain had a warm, humid climate.

There was even more human activity on the plain during Neolithic times, clustering along the rivers, as shown by post-liberation archaeological finds. Quite a few were uncovered in the vicinity of Xi'an, where better soil and water provided for better living. The most noted is Banpo Village (belonging to the Yangshao culture) unearthed in the early 50s on the eastern bank of the Dongchan River near Xi'an. The 50,000 square-meter area contains fairly complete remains of a matrilineal commune of 7,000 years ago with residences, pottery kilns and a burial ground. Remains of grain testify that considerable progress had been made in agriculture by then.

Later, knowledge of well-digging enabled people to live away from the rivers on the higher land.



Other remains have been found around the lakes on the plain.

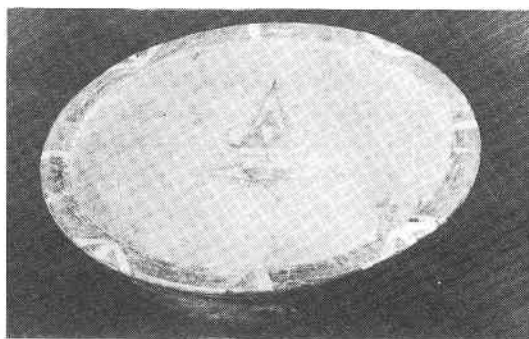
The Guanzhong Plain was the site of the capitals of the most famous dynasties in Chinese history — Western Zhou (11th century-771 B.C.), Qin (221-206 B.C.), Han (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) and Tang (618-907) — and of many shorter-lived ones. It has been a capital site for a total of over 1,000 years, longer than any other part of the country. The plain was a good place for a capital because of its agricultural prosperity as well as convenience for defense.

Not all the capitals were located at the same place on the plain. The Zhou dynasty and later the State of Qin of the Warring States period had their early capitals on the Zhou ancestral lands in its western part, but both were later moved to richer land eastward —

and nearer the Huanghe and the entrance point which every state sought to control. The city of Chang'an, capital of the Han dynasty, southwest of today's Xi'an, grew up after the Qin dynasty. Still using the same name, the dynasties of Sui (581-618) and Tang built capital cities on slightly different sites but still near Xi'an.

The Chang'an of Sui and Tang times was the biggest of Guanzhong's 11 capitals. The triangle formed by the Zhou capital, Xianyang the Qin capital and the Tang Chang'an encloses the richest part of the plain. The Tang capital of Chang'an was almost completely ruined by fighting in subsequent centuries, but remains of its city walls and important buildings, and of the tombs of the emperors can still be seen today. It covered an area of 8,410 hectares, excavations since liberation in 1949 show, but the present city has outstripped it.

Chang'an in Tang times consisted of three parts, the palace city in the center of the northern section, where the emperor lived and administered state affairs; the imperial city at the center which housed the court and official buildings; and the outer city surround-



Pottery basin with face design found in Banpo Village near Xi'an.



**Business center of present-day Xi'an.**

ing the latter on three sides, which contained 108 blocks where the people of the city lived. The compact and symmetrical layout was typical of Tang city construction and was followed as an example by succeeding dynasties.

#### **Cultural Exchange Center**

The capitals on the Guanzhong Plain were the center for both domestic and foreign exchanges, the latter extending as far as Japan to the east and western Asia, north Africa and Europe to the

west. In these the famed Old Silk Road played an important role from the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.) onward. Beginning at Xi'an it passed north-westward through the Gansu Corridor, crossed the Pamir Mountains and then traversed the lands that are today Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Arabia and Turkey straight to the coast of the Mediterranean. Along it passed silk products from China and exotic goods from the west, as well as the ideas that make for cultural exchange.

In Han times there was a street in Chang'an especially accommodating the merchants and travellers from the west. Even more came in Tang times. Many stayed for a long time. Chang'an became quite an international city in its customs and living habits. From the east also came many Japanese travellers, among them the High Monk Daitoku Chushaku, who lived in the Black Dragon Monastery and several others while studying Buddhism. Such cultural exchanges laid a firm basis for friendship between China and the peoples of other countries.

**The pomegranates of Lintong county are one of the famous products of the plain.**

*Photos by Xinhua*



Today the Longhai rail line, which begins on the seacoast in Jiangsu province, traverses part of the Old Silk Road beyond Xi'an to the industrial city of Baoji in Shaanxi province.

The ancient capital was an important handicraft center from early on. Now the Guanzhong plain is an important industrial area, with a large number of factories and plants dispersed about the plain, and also an important rail center. It has kept its fame as a major agricultural base. In addition to the ancient irrigation network in the lowlands, irrigation has been extended into the highlands. □



## Lesson 21

## Imperial Palace

(旅游团 参观 故宫, 他们从  
(Lǚyóutuán cānguān Gùgōng, tāmen cóng  
(Tourist group visit Imperial Palace, they from

南边 通过 天安门 进入 故宫)  
nánbiān tōngguò Tiānānmén jìnrù Gùgōng)  
south side through pass Tian An Men enter Imperial Palace)

王: 故宫, 也叫 紫禁城, 是  
Wáng: Gùgōng, yě jiào Zǐjìnchéng, shì  
Wang: Imperial Palace, also called Forbidden City, is  
中国 明、清 两代的 皇宫。  
Zhōngguó Míng, Qīng liǎng dài de huánggōng.  
China's Ming (and) Qing two dynasties' imperial palace.

至今 已经有 五百六十年的  
Zhì jīn yǐ jīng yǒu wǔbǎi liùshí nián de  
Till now already has 560 years'

历史。有 二十四个 皇帝 曾经  
lìshǐ. Yǒu èrshí sì ge huángdì céngjīng  
history. (It) have 24 emperors once

在这里 生活过。现在 作为  
zài zhèlǐ shēnghuóguo. Xiànzài zuòwéi  
here lived. Now as

博物院 开放。  
bówùyuàn kāifàng.  
museum is open.

勃朗: 这里 重重 殿宇, 好大 呀!  
Bólǎng: Zhèlǐ chóngchóng diànyǔ, hǎo dà ya!  
Brown: Here row after row halls, how big!

王: 故宫 占地 约 七十二万  
Wáng: Gùgōng zhàn dì yuē qīshí èrwàn  
Wang: Imperial Palace occupy land about 720,000

平方米, 有 各式 房屋  
píngfāngmǐ, yǒu gè shì fángwū  
square meters, have various styles (of) rooms (with)

九千多间。参观 路线 分  
jiǔqiān duō jiān. Cānguān lùxiàn fēn  
9,000 more. Sightseeing routes (are) divided (into)

中路、西路、东路 和  
zhōnglù, xīlù, dōnglù hé  
middle route, west route, east route and

外东路。  
wàidōnglù.  
outer east route.

萨克斯: 这几条 参观 路线 都 有  
Sākèsī: Zhè jǐ tiáo cānguān lùxiàn dōu yǒu  
Sachs: These several sightseeing routes all have

什么 特点 呢?  
shénme tèdiǎn ne?  
what special features?

王: 中路 的 太和殿、中和殿  
Wáng: Zhōnglù de Tàihédiàn, Zhōnghédiàn  
Wang: Middle route Tai He Hall, Zhong He Hall

和 保和殿 是 皇帝 日常 处理  
hé Bǎohédiàn shì huángdì rìcháng chǔlǐ  
and Bao He Hall are emperors usually dealt with  
国事 的地方。西路 和 东路  
guóshì de dìfang. Xīlù hé dōnglù  
state affairs place. West route and east route  
都是 旧时 妃子们 生活的  
dōu shì jiùshí fēizǐmen shēnghuó de  
all are old days' imperial concubines' living

宫殿。  
gōngdiàn.  
halls.

史密斯: 我们 先从 中路 看起 吧。  
Shímǐsī: Wǒmen xiān cóng zhōnglù kànqǐ ba.  
Smith: We first from middle route see.

前面 那 宏伟 的 宫殿 就 是  
Qiánmiàn nà hóngwēi de gōngdiàn jiù shì  
Ahead that magnificent hall is

太和殿 吗?  
Tàihédiàn ma?  
Tai He Hall?

王: 对。它 是 故宫里 最大 的  
Wáng: Duì. Tā shì Gùgōnglǐ zuì dà de  
Wang: Right. It is Imperial Palace in largest

宫殿。皇帝 即位, 宣布  
gōngdiàn. Huángdì jí wèi, xuānbù  
hall. Emperors ascended throne, promulgated

政令 等 重大 活动,  
zhènglìng děng zhòngdà huódòng,  
government decrees and so on important activities,

都 在这儿 举行。  
dōu zài zhèr jǔxíng.  
all at here held.

玛利: 皇帝 和 皇后 住在 什么  
Mǎlì: Huángdì hé huánghòu zhùzài shénme  
Marie: Emperor and empress lived what

地方 呢?  
dìfang ne?  
place?

王: 在 三大殿 后面 有 后 三宫,  
Wáng: Zài sān dà diàn hòumiàn yǒu hòu sān gōng,  
Wang: At three big halls behind have back three halls,

那是 皇帝、皇后 居住 的地方。  
nà shì huángdì, huánghòu jūzhù de dìfang.  
that is emperor, empress living place.

史密斯：故宫里不是还有许多

Shimis: Gùgōnglǐ bú shì hái yǒu xǔduō  
Smith: Imperial Palace in not is still have many

文物展览可以参观吗？

wénwù zhǎnlǎn kěyǐ cānguān ma?  
cultural relics exhibits can visit?

王：是的。东路和外东路有

Wáng: Shì de. Dōnglù hé wàidōnglù yǒu  
Wang: Yes. East route and outer east route have

各种展览馆，如

gè zhǒng zhǎnlǎnguǎn, rú  
various kinds exhibit halls, such as

陶瓷馆、青铜器馆、

táocǐguǎn, qīngtóngqìguǎn,  
Pottery (and) Porcelain Hall, Bronzeware Hall,

珍宝馆等等，我们可以逐个

zhēnbǎoguǎn děngděng, wǒmen kěyǐ zhúgè  
Treasure Hall and so on, we can one by one

去参观。

qù cānguān.  
go visit.

戈登：今天参观得完吗？

Gēdēng: Jīntiān cānguān de wán ma?

Gordon: Today (can we) visit finish?

王：快一点可以参观完。

Wáng: Kuài yídiǎn kěyǐ cānguānwán.

Wang: Quick a bit can visit finish.

史密斯：故宫从建筑艺术上说是

Shimis: Gùgōng cóng jiànzhù yìshùshàng shuō shì  
Smith: Imperial Palace from architecture art speaking is

了不起的，而且它还是一

liǎobùqǐ de, érqiě tā hái shì yí  
amazing, and it also is a

个灿烂的文物宝库。

ge cǎnlàn de wénwù bǎokù.  
splendid cultural relic treasure-house.

### Translation

(The tourist group visits the Imperial Palace. They enter from the south through Tian An Men Gate.)

Wang: The Imperial Palace, also called the Forbidden City, was the palace in the Ming and Qing dynasties. It has a history of 560 years. Twenty-four emperors lived here. Now it is open as a museum.

Brown: There are halls one after another. How big it is!

Wang: The Imperial Palace covers an area of about 720,000 square meters. There are more than 9,000 rooms of various types. There are middle, west, east and outer east routes for sightseeing.

Sachs: What are the special features of each route?

Wang: The middle route includes Tai He Hall (Hall of Supreme Harmony), Zhong He Hall (Hall of Complete Harmony) and Bao He Hall (Hall of Preserving Harmony) — where the emperors usually administered

state affairs. The west and east routes include halls where imperial concubines lived in the old days.

Smith: Let us see from the middle route first. Is that superb hall in front of us Tai He Hall?

Wang: Yes. It is the largest hall in the Imperial Palace. Important ceremonies such as accession to the throne and promulgation of decrees were held here.

Marie: Where did emperors and empresses live?

Wang: Behind the three big halls are three rear halls. Those were their quarters.

Smith: Doesn't the Imperial Palace still have many cultural relics that we can see?

Wang: Yes. The east and outer east routes include various exhibition halls, such as the Pottery and Porcelain Hall, Bronzeware Hall and Treasure Hall. We can visit them one by one.

Gordon: Shall we be able to finish our sightseeing today?

Wang: If we go a bit faster, we'll be able to finish today.

Smith: The Imperial Palace from an architectural point of view is amazing and it is also a splendid treasure-house of cultural relics.

### Notes

1. Ability and possibility with néng 能 (can) and kěyǐ 可以 (may).

Wǒ néng tīngdǒng zhōngwén. 我能听懂中文。(I can understand Chinese — Literally: hear and understand.) Zhè zuò shān nǐ néng shàngqu ma? 这座山你能上去吗？(Can you climb this mountain?) Jīntiān kěyǐ cānguān wán. 今天可以参观完。(It's possible to finish our sightseeing today.)

Another way to express possibility is by putting de 得 between the verb and its complement. Jīntiān cānguān de wán. 今天参观得完。(We shall be able to finish our sightseeing today.) Wǒ tīng de dǒng zhōngwén. 我听得懂中文。(I understand Chinese.) Zhè zuò shān nǐ shàng de qu ma? 这座山你上得去吗？(Can you climb the mountain?)

In the negative of this form bù 不 replaces 得. Jīntiān cānguān bù wán. 今天参观不完。(We shall not be able to finish our sightseeing today.) Wǒ tīng bù dǒng zhōngwén. 我听不懂中文。(I don't understand Chinese.) Zhè zuò shān wǒ shàng bú qù. 这座山我上不去。(I can't climb the mountain.)

2. Hǎo 好 as an intensifier.

Hǎo 好 (good) is often placed as an intensifier before an adjective, usually in an exclamation. Hǎo rè de tiānqì! 好热的天气！(How hot it is!) Hǎo piàoliang de jiànzhù! 好漂亮的建筑！(What a beautiful building!) Zhèlǐ hǎo dà ya! 这里好大呀！(What a big place!) Zhèxiē gōngdiàn hǎo hóngwèi ya! 这些宫殿好宏伟呀！(What magnificent palaces!)



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