

CHINESISCHES TAGEBUCH

Diese Aufzeichnungen sind das Ergebnis einer Reise durch die Volksrepublik China, welche wir, Yennie und ich, vom 10. Dezember bis zum 20. Februar dieses Jahres unternahmen. Ich hatte das Glück, in Erfahrung zu bringen, dass die VR nun auch Visa für Einzelreisende ausstellt, im Rahmen eines einjährigen Experimentes, wie es hiess, und nicht nur für Gruppenreisende aus dem Westen, wie bisher. Da ich darüber hinaus auch die Mittel für eine solche Reise grossartigerweise zur Verfügung gestellt bekam, nahm ich diese vielleicht einmalige Gelegenheit wahr und reiste am 5.12.81 in Yennies Begleitung, deren Familie unser Sponsor war, nach Hongkong, wo uns auch tatsächlich Visa ausgestellt wurden, welche uns gestatteten, das Land einen Monat zu besichtigen. Verlangern konnte man zweimal, was einem Maximum von drei Monaten gleichkommt. Alles in allem verbrachten wir zehn Wochen im Land, mit dem längsten Aufenthalt von einer Woche in Beijing. Als Transportmittel benutzten wir öffentliche Verkehrsmittel wie den Zug, Bus und Schiff, welche billig waren, wenn man die Tickets selbst und an der richtigen Stelle kaufte. Sie kosten bis zu doppelt so viel, wenn man sie in den Agenturen des offiziellen chinesischen Reisebüros kauft.

Unsere Reise führte uns an 17 verschiedene (grössere) Orte - zwei Gebirge mit eingeschlossen - in zehn der insgesamt 26 Provinzen Chinas (Taiwan und die autonomen Regionen Xizang-Tibet- und Nei Mongol - die innere Mongolei - ausgenommen). Manche dieser Provinzen sind für Ausländer gesperrt, wie Guizhou, Qinghai und Gansu zum Beispiel, ohne Angabe irgendwelcher Erklärungen; man hört Gerüchte über Aufstände und Zusammenstösse von Staatsgewalt und unzufriedenen Bauern oder halb-sinisierten Völkern an den Randgebieten. Was daran wahr ist, liess sich allerdings nicht feststellen, da ich ja nicht als Reporter durch das Land reiste, sondern als ein an der Kultur interessierter junger Student, dem Politik ein Feld der Betätigung ist wie das Bellen einer Katze. Als Student der Sinologie kann ich aber natürlich nicht umhin, mich nur mit dem Wahren, Schoenen und Guten zu beschäftigen und Unliebsames unter den Tisch fallen zu lassen, wenn ich mich auch mit Chinas Gegenwart, in Form des direkten Erlebnisses durch diese Reise, konfrontiert sehe. So ist denn diese Aufzeichnung bestimmt keine unpolitische, aber auf der Ebene, die wir als einfache Reisende in der VR einnahmen, hatten wir nicht allzu viele Berührungspunkte mit dem politischen und demzufolge bürokratischen Apparat, der weich und schwer und unantastbar wie eine Qualle über dem Land liegt und seine Tentakel bis in die intimsten Bereiche der Menschen dort hineinreichen lässt. Was wir aber brauchten von ihm, waren Reiseerlaubnis und Visaverlängerungen, welche auch gewährt wurden, wobei die Behandlung sehr unterschiedlich war, einmal freundlich und herzlich, dann wieder abweisend sachlich, in einer solch starren Art, wie sie der deutschen Bürokratie in ihren besten Jahren Ehre gemacht hätte; welche traurige und frustrierende Gänge hatten wir manchmal zur Polizei, die für Ausländer die Papiere ausstellte. Für Chinesen selbst sind solche Gänge oft schicksalentscheidend, und in der rüden Art, wie der Arbeitende oft von höherer Ebene herab behandelt wird, sehe ich nicht das grossartige humanistische Erbe eines uralten Kulturvolkes, sondern nur die Arroganz einer wenn nicht neuen, so doch um so mächtigeren Bürokratenklasse, in wahnwitziger Uebersteigerung des sowjetischen Modells, welches zwanzig Stufen der Beamtenhierarchie zählt, während es in der Volksrepublik ganze dreissig sind, auf die sich ein ambitionierter Genosse freuen kann. Nach der konfuzianischen Weltordnung, welche in ihrer späten Phase eben diesen Apparat aufkommen hat lassen (am Ende der Ming Zeit übernahmen die erobernden Mandschu das System mehr oder weniger so, wie sie es vorgefunden hatten und erst 1905 wurde das alte Examinierungssystem abgeschafft, woraufhin die chinesische Intelligenz nach Japan sich wandte oder nach Uebersee ging), sie besagt, dass der spirituell Erhabenste die Welt regiere, in der weitgehend moralisch kodifiziert wird, was andernorts die Judikative bildet. Eine Gesetzgebung, kalt u

mechanisch, dünkten ihnen unmenschlich und korrumpierte die Auffassung, dass Sitte und Rechtschaffenheit genuegten, sich selbst reinzuhalten, dieses auf die Familie uebertragen bedeutete den naechsten Schritt in Richtung organisierten Zusammenlebens, und in einer Dorfgemeinschaft entscheiden die Aeltesten ueber etwaige Streitfaelle. (Heute ist es die Danwei-Einheit-, die diese Stelle uebernommen hat, eine Produktionsgemeinschaft, die von profiterorientierten Kadern geleitet wird, die Plansolls zu erfuehlen haben) Das konfuzianistische System, welches nur eine von vielen Richtungen ist, in die sich philosophisches Denken aufspaltete und sicherlich in vielen Punkten Maengel aufweist, ist heute von der politischen Seite her gesehen in China nicht mehr relevant (im Volke begegnet man ihm unter den Alten viel, die junge Generation besitzt nichts dergleichen, ausser natuerlich dem Glaube an den Marxismus-Leninismus und der Freiheit von den Produktionsguetern), dafuer aber ist ein weiteres altes scholastisches Verfahren, wie mit dem Volke zu verfahren sei, an seine Stelle getreten und hat, wie damals schon, viel Blutzoll erhoben, die besten Koepe des Landes in den Abgrund gestuerzt und die Bevoelkerung durch ein ausgekluegeltes System der Ueberwachung und voellige Verfuegungsgewalt seitens miteinander rivalisierender Machteliquen unter sich selbst aufgerieben und aufeinandergehetzt. Damals wie heute standen edle Absichten hinter den grausamen Taten dieser totalitaerer Regierungen: zur Zeit der Qin 221-209/8 sollte und wurde das Reich, welches sich in einem Zustande der Aufloesung und Aufspaltung befand, von den Soldaten des Staates Qin militaerisch eroebert, wobei diese nicht gerade zimperlich vorgingen (die Soldaten des Staates Zhao z.B., 400.000 an der Zahl, welche sich ergeben hatten und denen scheinbar Pardon gewaehrt wurde, wurden spaeter alle= samt niedergemacht, nachdem man ihre Waffen eingesammelt hatte). Der militaerischen Einigung folgte die Vereinheitlichung von Wagenspurbreite, Gewichten und vor allem der Schrift, die nun fuer das gesamte Reich auf einen Nenner, d.h. Schrifttyp, gebracht wurde. Die Regierungsform kommt einem Absolutismus sehr nahe, man kann sagen es war eine Schreckensherrschaft; eine philosophische Stroemung, die voraussetzte, dass des Menschen Natur eine grundlegend schlechte sei, brachte nun Koepe hervor, die das Volk mit grausamen Strafgesetzen vor eben diesen Schlechtigkeiten bewahren wollten. Aus Angst vor Einwaenden von etwas gemaessigter Seite wurden die alte Literatur und Geschichtsbuecher verbrannt, aus denen haette man ja Material zu einer Kritik am Staat ziehen koennen. Um ganz sicher zu gehen, wurden dann auch noch jene, welche mit den Werken etwas anzufangen gewusst haetten, im ganzen Reich ermordet. Es waren damals "nur" 4600 Gelehrte, welche hingerichtet worden waren, waehrend der Kulturrevolution, als die radikale Linke gewaltsame Saueberungen von bourgeoisen Elementen durchfuehrte, waren es zehnmal so viele, die Universitaeten hatten teils das Niveau von Mittelschulen. Die Sache, um die es diesmal ging, war die Befreiung von einem Druck von aussen, der das Land derart zum Spielball der Koenigreiche gemacht hatte, dass es sich "im Guten" daraus nie haette befreien koennen. So wurde die Situation mit Gewalt geloest, die Japaner vertrieben, den Westmaechten zur Befriedigung ihrer Gier nach Besitz und Profit Hongkong ueberlassen und danach die Grenzen dichtgemacht. Dass das Land danach in einen solchen Extremismus verfallen konnte und sich selbst seiner Vergangenheit amputieren wollte, war meinem Dafuerhalten nach die Ueberreaktion auf eine uralte Denkweise, welche mehr die Intuition und das Gefuehl fuer das Wesen einer Sache hervorhebte als diesen Sachverhalt durch rationale, logische Analysen zu untersuchen, das bedeutet, dem Intellekt die alleinige Vorherrschaft einzuraeumen, ohne das Herz zu beteiligen, woraus grausame Blueten entstehen koennen. So wurde etwa der Leitsatz "Alle Menschen sind gleich" uebertragen auf die Formel "Alle haben die gleichen Schuhe an" und in Shanghai standen waehrend einer bestimmten Zeit der Kulturrevolution Aufpasser an den Strassenecken, mit der Weisung, jeden, der nicht jene gruenen proletarisch-revolutionaeren Segeltuchschuhe trug, fuer 4 Wochen aufs Land zu schicken, wo sie ihre Gesinnung bei 14 Stunden Arbeit am Tag neu formulieren konnten. Und nach bester Legalistischer Tradition, jenem Verfahren, wie mit dem Volke zu verfahren sei, wurden die Menschen in Gruppen eingeteilt, die fuereinander gerade

zustehen hatten,Blockwarts etc.Aber all dñes ist ja laengst bekannt,durch die Medien gegangen,intelligente und spekulative Literatur darueber ist im Umlauf,nicht nur fuer Experten und solche,die es werden wollen.Meine Absicht bei dieser kleinen Ueber= sichtsicht warz aufzuzeigen,wie in der heutigen Volksrepublik China die Vergangenheit gewissermassen sich selbst bewaeltigt(oder ueberwaeltigt,wenn man wikt),indem die klassischen Denkweisen nach der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Westen sich selbst im blutigen Streit untereinander aufloesen und starre Formen zeugen wie erkaltete Lava nach einem Vulkanausbruch.Was uebrig geblieben ist von der ~~er~~ Spiritualitaet und Humanitaet eines einzigartigen Volkes war gottseidank ein zu @grosser Brocken fuer die Maechtigen,um sie vollends auszuloeschen,die Literatur ist enorm,Malerei Architektur und Bronzen durchzieht alle Schichten.Nur die lebenden Beispiele,sie sind selten geworden.

Allerdings,der Hoehepunkt oekonomischer Gleichschaltung und kultureller Unterdrueckung scheint mir bereits ueberschritten.Man findet die Buchlaeden wieder etwas besser sortiert,Mark Twain und Joseph Conrad zusammen mit einer ganzen Reihe weiterer Penguin-Taschenbuecher sind fuer Chinesen wie fuer den Auslaender Erhaeltlich,wenn auch nicht gerade billig.Viele Buchlaeden haben eine besondere Theke eingerichtet fuer englische Sprachbuecher,Lexika und anderes fremdsprachliches Lehrmaterial. In der Oper wird wieder Hong Lou Meng-DER traum in der roten Kammer-gegeben,ein Stueck,welches lange Zeit verboten war aufzufuehren und fuer die extreme Linke unter Fuehrung der Madame Chiang Ching,die selbst Schauspielerin gewesen war, ein staendiges Angriffsziel ihrer Kritiken bildete.Des weiteren wurden in den letzten zwei Jahren Buecher publiziert,an die frueher niemand sich herangewagt haette, bzw. die Beschaeftigung eines solchen Thema waere schwergefallen ,vor der indok= tinierten Masse zu rechtfertigen.Und schliesslich,es wurden die Grenzen geoeffnet. Von Hongkong aus kann man heute nicht nur als Gruppenreisender,sondern auch indi= viduell,wobei einem kein Fuehrer beigegeben wird,per Schiff nach Shanghai,mit dem Hovercraft den Fluss hinauf nach Canton(guangdong),per Zug oder Flugzeug fast jede wichtigere Stadt erreichen.Unser erstes Ziel war Kanton,und wir gingen zu Fuss ueber die Grenze,folgten da dem handgemalten Schild,welches uns einfach und lako= nisch den Weg wies:To China.

Zu jedem Ort,den wir besuchten,wird eine kleine historische Einleitung und Ueber= sicht gegeben.

Manches Wichtige wird ungesagt bleiben; das Land ist weit und gross,des Menschen Ausdrucksfaehigkeit reicht kaum aus,die eigenen Verhaeltnisse klar zu formulieren.

Das Tage buch ist angelegt,wie fuer solche Stuecke ueblich,beginnend mit dem ersten Tag.,der Ueberschreitung der Grenze,der Ankunft in Kanton,und schliesseng mit der Rueckkehr nach Hongkong nach genau zehn Wochen.

Die Umschrift der chinesischen Zeichen ist die in der VR offiziell gebraeuchliche Pinyin Umschrift,wobei die Toene nicht angegeben werden.

Am Ende des Tagebuches ist eine kleine Buecherliste ~~angammangestellt~~,welche Gebiete der Politik,Philosophie,Geschichte und Reisen umfasst.

10th december 1981

We boarded the train in Hongkong some time around 1 pm and for an hour or so made our way slowly but steadily along the Pearl River, passing the university of Hongkong, towards the chinese boarder. At the boarder we got off the train and walked through the customs, changing money - tourist money that is, a special paper money designed for foreign visitors called foreign exchange certificate, the highest note being 50 yuan, which is something like 65 DM or 30 \$ US. People at the customs were friendly but interested in the goods that Yennie would bring into the country because they assumed she had relatives for whom she would bring presents. They were right and so it took her much longer than me to get through with it all. What I had to do was filling out a form about my physical condition, attesting myself good health, which of course I did. Our cameras were booked on a seperate sheet of paper to make sure we wouldn't sell them. Cassette players and tvs and the like will also be written down, so you have to take them out again or pay toll for it which will be quite a lot. There are ways, however, to bring profitable goods into the country and sell them there at a very good price, especially modern electronic devices for entertainment from Japan.

The whole station at the boarder is located at a small river not more than 10 m wide and you have to cross a bridge separating China proper from the Hongkong domaine. It was largely under construction when we passed it twice in december and then to the end of february this year and rather confusing. They are building new premisses now to be able to handle the increasingly larger volume of visitors which come into the country every year.

We made our way through it all and found ourselves in a rather gloomy looking and dusty place which turned out to be the chinese railway station. It was here that Yennie had her first contact with one strain of character of the new chinese people which made her very upset and bewildered. She was buying our tickets for the train to Guangdong (Canton) and the saleswoman only wanted to sell her those tickets to a price much more expensive than what the average chinese pays. After some arguing on Yennie's side she finally produced the right tickets but now refused to give back the change. I believe this was because the money was paid in foreign exchange currency which she chose to keep. Yennie became angry and then was reaching through the small window opening, snatching the rest of our money from the woman, who was shouting after her in cantonese, nothing but good wishes I think. However, we had managed to get our tickets to the regular price and had also gotten the exact change, which is always an accomplishment in the people's republic if you are not a student at one of the chinese universities or a foreign expert.

The train we were on now was a really slow one, stopping every twenty minutes or so taking on new passengers and letting people get off. Yennie was tired and half asleep in her third class chair when these three or four young men showed up. Two of them had some luggage which they placed right beside our packs so that they actually touched them while the whole rest of the luggage rack was completely empty. They seated themselves next to our compartment, looking over now and again to see if I was asleep or not. It was obvious that they wanted to get away with some of our stuff and after awhile one of them changed position to the place diagonal from mine to have a better look at my doings. I got annoyed and stood up to fumble around with our luggage, pushed back their belongings, which were neatly spread out so it would give them time to assemble whatever there would be to lay hands on, then looked at them. They were about twenty years old and maybe had some job to do, maybe not, but certainly the job that they wanted to do now would have to be left undone. They did not wear those blue ants uniforms, but then, not many people in the south, close to the boarder do wear them. Hongkong has an influence that reaches far into the country. The whole affair lasted about three hours, the young men watching me and I having an eye on them, until they finally reached their home-town station and left the train. To me that was a good lesson and we were extremely cautious after that attempt, and we never lost something on the whole journey. Some people we met on the way had similar experiences like pickpocketing and theft, mostly in southern cities.

Our train finally pulled into the Canton railway station at around 9.20 pm, after a 4-and-a-half hour ride from the frontier where it had left in the late afternoon. There is also a fast train to the boarder which takes you there in less than two hours, but which costs a lot more and has no third class. There is still another one going right through to either Hongkong or Canton so you don't need to change train and which costs something like 45\$ whereas we only paid 5\$ for the same way for both of us. The distance by train is about 180 km. You can take a hovercraft up the pearl river to Canton, which could be a more pleasant way to reach your destination, but unfortunately I heard about it too late, so I don't know the times or the price. Another feature of the Chinese train is that they have loudspeakers all over the place with music mostly, very loud and noisy, but there is a switch to them at each coach door in most trains. Maybe that is enough about Chinese trains for now, though there is a lot more to them and they deserve close attention for various different reasons.

We had some information about Chinese hotels, which are also something to write an article about and the one in Canton was a good start for us. They wanted us to stay in two separate rooms, each one for about 20\$ and entirely disagreed with us that there were dormitories with vacant beds for about 3\$ per night. We were negotiating for a period of time with the moody employee, who was responsible for reservations and talked her into checking the dorms on the various floors. The outcome of this was that I had secured a bed in the fourth floor dorm and Yennie got a bed in a room in the new wing of the hotel for slightly more than mine. The rooms were spacious and clean and we had late dinner at one of the two restaurants of this modern style eight-story hotel. It also has a cafeteria which is opened until 11 o'clock and became our favourite place to sit and talk and have a cup of tea and look at other people, who were to the greatest part Chinese from Hongkong, another topic well worth some lengthy discussion. We met them in the most secluded and out-of-the-world places, thin and wiry, buzzing and ever moving, growing up in one of most energetic spots on this earth. There are some superlatives here, but what they are doing right now in Japan or Taipei Singapore or Hongkong is just incredible, a Hals-ueber-Kopf pace, as we say in my country. Anyway, talking about this hotel, it also has a nightclub with a Chinese band playing western style music opened until 12 or 1am and you have to pay an entrance fee to get in. We never did, so I can't say anything about it. We went to bed early that day and I loved to sleep in this bed with a long mosquito net around its four posts and then being tied to a ring maybe 50 cm in diameter attached to the ceiling where the clean cloth is hanging from so that you are actually looking into something like a transparent tube, becoming tapered towards the ring. Very cozy, that and so I slept very well all through the night. Since our hotel was situated directly across from the railway station, with a traffic roundell in between, the first trucks appeared at around half past four and from that time on it was difficult to find peace, especially so because my bed was placed just beside the window looking over the vast area in front of the railway station, and thus I became a witness by ear and sight of the early beginning of a Chinese working day in Guangdong. It was the

11th december 1981

The Chinese name for the town is Guangzhou, it is the capital of Guangdong Province with over 2 million inhabitants. There exists a legend which says that five celestial genies (wu xian), riding goats, came to bring the first cereals to the inhabitants of the area; today the town is still sometimes called Yang cheng (goat town) and a memorial showing the goatriding genies was erected north of the city in this century.

The origins of the place are not clearly known but it is assumed that the first major settlement was founded in 214 b.c. in the time of Qin shi Huang di, who had sent expeditions to the south in order to inspect the newly formed empire. During the Han dynasty it was for some time the capital of the autonomous state of Nan Yue. In the following period of the Three Kingdoms the Canton area was under the dominion of the state of Wu. The name Guangzhou first appears at this time. Under the T'ang the town was enlarged and several proofs exist of active exchange with the south seas (a large moslem community existed and a mosque was founded). At the end of the dynasty, the town was badly damaged under Huang Chao's troops. In the tenth century, it was again the capital of an autonomous dynasty, the Southern Han who called it Xing Wang Fu.

The first great period of development occurred during the Song dynasty. Under the northern Song, the town grew considerably; it was divided into three districts (western, central and eastern town) walled off from each other. Under the Ming, the town was still flourishing; it spread northwards, as far as Mount Yue Xiu, and southwards along the Pearl River, whose banks had been altered. Industry (weaving, ship-building, wrought iron and pottery) developed still further. The first european embassy, the portuguese embassy led by Tome Pires, landed in 1514. Resistance here to the Mandchu was violent and the Qing had to launch several campaigns before they finally took possession of the town. It developed little under the Qing; the arrival of the Europeans gradually created new conditions. The Cantonese were the first chinese to come under Western influence, and also among the first to react to the influence.

From the mid-19th century onwards, Canton was a stronghold of democratic and revolutionary ideas. In 1839, the mandarin Lin Ze Xu had some of the cases of opium imported by the English destroyed; in 1841, the population of the surroundings of Canton, and particularly of the little town San Yuan Li, took arms and opposed a British expeditionary force; in 1854-54, during the Tai Ping rebellion, the Li Wan Zhong rising took place in the Canton area; in 1911 there was an armed rising against the Mandchu (later called the Huang Hua Gang rising) in which 72 rebels were caught and executed. In 1923 Sun Yat Sen came back to Canton and founded the Guo Min Dang; in 1925 and 1926, Mao Ze Dong, with some other communists, including Zhou En Lai and Guo Mo Ruo, ran the peasant movement institute in the former temple of Confucius; in 1927, Chiang kai shek suppressed the workers movements in Shanghai and at the same time crushed the Canton worker's rising (5,000 victims) Canton is now one of the most important industrial centres in south China, and one of China's leading trading ports. The annual Cantonese Trading Fair is known in all Asia. Canton is also a cultural centre with the Sun Yat Sen university (Lin Yu Tang and Lu Xun lectured here) and various interesting museums.

We left our hotel, which was called Liu Hua Bin Guan, and went to the police station, a thirty minute walk along fairly modern streets with trees on both sides, to report our presence and to apply for a document named Travel Permit, which is a must in China if you want to go and see places. Between 90 and 100 places are open to foreign guests and we applied for our next places we wanted to visit. These were Guilin, Kunming, Chongqing in Sichuan. We payed our money, not very much, I remember it was 1 yuan per given permission for a place, and were asked to pick the documents up in the afternoon. During that time we were strolling through the streets of Canton, reaching the old part of the city with its low dark-brown worn-out houses, witnessing the poverty of their inhabitants. It was a sunny day, but still the people inside had to light their lamps and neon lamps with cold gleam fighting the everlasting twilight in rooms quite bare of any decoration. Yet at the outside some of these houses were beautifully carved, around the entrance door, the window frames or the beams separating the first floor from the ground floor. On the streets we could distinguish three main types of clothing:

first of all there were the people wearing the common blue cotton clothes, in all states of repair and fading colour, the older the person the lighter the colour. Second we saw many people wearing the green army clothes made of the same cotton, cut the same shape like civilian clothes, but usually it fit the wearer a little better. If he or she was an active we recognized it by seeing red stripes attached to the collar. Since the Chinese army has abolished rank differences but still has to cope with the problem of who is who, it is not easy to make distinctions between commoners and superiors. These do wear a slightly better tailored outfit made from a better kind of cloth, and also the positions of the stripes are relevant in a way. However, there is no guarantee to these distinctions; we met the head of the Shanghai police for example, whom no one would be able to recognize as the holder of such an influential post merely by the clothes he wears. He completely blends in with the masses of Chinese population.

The third category only concerns the old or elderly people. They wear mostly black, cotton or cord jackets and pants with legs too short.

The most common thing to wear is maybe a mixture of the first two, green and blue, so if you board a train and you stop at the entrance to a second or third class coach, all you will see over the shoulders of the seats is black and brown for the head and blue and green for the rest of the people's upper part visible to you. No loud colours or blond hair, just uniform. However, in the cities we saw a variety of western clothes being worn mostly by young people.

In the afternoon we picked our travel permits up and wandered into a completely different part of town to the east. Here we found heavy industrial plants with rising chimneys filling the air with horrible winds. It was dark by now and we had dinner at a restaurant or maybe it was more like a stand providing tables out in the open with food. We ordered fish and vegetables, noodles and meat and it was all there and well done and cheap. I liked the food in China from the very first day, although it is sometimes greasy and therefore very fat. They use their oil a long long time and once in a while we came upon a stench in the air which filled our nose and frontal cavity and made us really sick and unable to think properly.

This time it was not the old oil the kitchen used and which made us cough for the next three days but the vapour coming from the petrochemical factory right across the street. Ecological movement in China is very slow and environmental damage heavy, in fact pollution is the worst I have encountered on my many travels, leaving aside Taipei, which sets a standard of its own with all the busses and motorcycles. Local town busses in China run with gas or on electricity, so pollution stemming from cars or the few private vehicles is not the major factor. It's industry and factories with low level filter systems and ineffective wastage procession and disposal. People thus work under conditions not agreeable to the western worker in terms of safety and general health.

I do not mean to attribute this statement to all the places involved in mechanical production, but the majority of them are not up to western standard. We had a long way back to the hotel, walking along one of the new main streets for cars in Canton (it was obviously not a street for people). The fairly new bus station was here and the American embassy with a massive wall around its area. We had only been strolling around, having a look at the place, searching for nothing in particular during the day. Back at the hotel, we paid for the next night and Yennie changed to the girl's dormitory in my building on the sixth floor. After that we had tea in the cafeteria, discussing plans for the next day. We wanted to visit the provincial museum and find out how we could get from Canton to Guilin, furthermore have a look at the goods being sold at the department store.

12. December 1981

We left the hotel without breakfast and walked to the travel agency to inquire about means of transportation to Guilin. The CITS-China international travel service-office is located just right of the railway station and they told us about a train connection with a stopover for the night at Hengyang in Hunan province. Now this is something like going from Rome to Paris via Budapest so we decided against it; besides, it was not the only way to choose. We went to the Chinese airline ticket office and heard that it would cost us 60 yuan each to fly to Guilin in an hour. Since this is double the price the Chinese pay we decided against it. Next we walked over to the bus station and here we learnt that there was a bus leaving every day for Guilin via Wuzhou for 18.50 yuan, so Yennie was changing into my old blue army jacket that I was wearing all the time and got into line with the other people standing in front of the ticket counter. She got our tickets for the normal price which made us quite happy I must admit and from then on Yennie was always getting our tickets to the normal price except once on the trip from Peking to Qingdao, she just removed her hairclips, took off her earrings and put on my jacket to look like everyone else and she managed all right, sometimes assisted by me in finding out which train number we are on and such things. It is much hardship standing in a so called queue in China because it is a slow and unfriendly task; all the time people trying to get in front of you or asking other comrades to buy tickets for them and sometimes it took the whole afternoon to get to the front only to be told with a wry smile that tickets were not for sale right now but tomorrow morning at 6:30 they would be. We needed a lot of patience and through this we succeeded and saved ourselves a lot of money. For if you buy your tickets with CITS it will cost up to 70% more. Some people, travellers like we were, found some friendly Chinese youths who would purchase the tickets for them, yet afterwards they were gone, money, ticket and all (as happened to a friend of ours in Shanghai). This is not the rule, however, but still things are starting up there like in India or in Marokko, where the trusting traveller is fooled and laughed at. The people are really poor and it's understandable, but on the other hand, where is the famous Chinese loyalty and moral stability which has brought forth such marvellous achievements. It can only be found in the old books now, I am afraid. But we will see. There is still another way how to get to Guilin and that is first by boat to Wuzhou, which must be a magnificent trip during the warmer seasons and costs only slightly more than the bus. Of this we heard only after we had bought our ticket, otherwise it was very tempting to go up the Pearl river on a small river craft and from what we saw from the bus it really looked beautiful. Wuzhou is just on the tropic of cancer by the way.

The purchase of the ticket took the whole morning, so in the afternoon we took our time and paid a visit to the provincial museum on the hill in the east of the city, which was closed for some reason. Just beneath the old museum building was the Cantonese football stadium and I saw some movement on its grounds. The few spectators interested all seemed to have climbed the fence here high above the lawn so I felt free and did the same watching the game between Hongkong and Canton, which ended in a draw as far as I can recall. The sun was shining and I was actually sitting in the shade, having a good view over the town spread out beneath my feet. Afterwards we went to the Chinese department store looking at the goods displayed behind the counters (there is no self service in those places). It was rather impressive to see all the silks with the somewhat old fashioned designs, the cutlery and small hardware which features some really amazing items like these scissors which haven't changed in shape for over 1500 years, or the textiles and porcelain on sale. I often thought by myself: 'they have it all, all the necessary things to live with

and for daily usage, it is all there. I like it, I don't need more, I could live here and be out of the race of consum and artificial wants and needs, be in peace at least in this respect. 'The store was large and old and a little shabby like most of the stores and shops in the People's Republic, with wooden floors and broad stairways leading up its four floors with the suitcases and cameras and larger articles. It was crowded like on a summer's sale day at home in the city, though it was a week and working day for everybody. Everywhere in China there are the masses, moving and pushing and if you don't employ the same physical attitude of a friendly but nevertheless determined thrust in a certain direction you are not willing to go you simply will not be able to get there, because you are just taken in by the masses and washed away to a place you never meant to go. No kidding. Whether we wanted to get on a bus or up some stairways, in the city it was never possible without pushing towards our goal. At the counters in the bookshops, in the restaurants in Peking (we tried three times to eat Peking duck in a certain place just off the main shopping street in the capital and never succeeded) in the museums and local attractions, there were crowds almost everywhere. Worst it was on the trains at around the Chinese New Year. You will find it hard to feel alone in this country.

We bought a map of the town in the bookshop not far from the river and walked along its bank, bought some fruits and food and then returned slowly home. On the way back to the hotel we passed a strange looking place which advertised coffee and tea. It was not yet dark and we went inside the obviously privately operated little shop which was well designed by proportions of its tables and benches to accommodate human beings sized five feet and under. We had a tea and a coffee and I felt very awkward in this nice little room with its light blue stone walls. It looked exactly like an oversized puppet or doll's house to me. With being over six feet tall I felt like Gulliver in his travels anyway, but this was really the most embarrassing moment to me when we left and I had to try and shift my legs from out under table where it had taken so much effort to stow them away. I would have been easy to lift the whole table, stand up and place the table back again, but I did not want to make a fuss about it and smiled a lot and nodded my head to indicate that everything was perfectly alright. The Chinese have an old saying which says that when the mountains are high and the king is on the other side it will take him some time to where you are and besides the mountains prevent him from seeing all that you do, and I believe it's partially this distance feeling from Peking and the central government that makes the people in the south inventive and provides them with enough confidence to set up businesses of their own, a sort of enterprise rarely seen in the north closer to Peking or in the capital itself. This little coffeeshop was maybe a pioneering undertaking but it could not have been started without approval of the local authorities. It was not the only one of its kind of small restaurants run privately by a family that we had food or tea at in the south and we found not only that the cooking was mostly better than in the huge restaurants in the north but also that the service was much more friendly because the people are interested in you and they want you to come back not only for your money but also they are or were curiously interested in this westerner being together with one of their own kind and kin who was certainly not a local person. We had a lot of attention paid to us, but it was never like some friends of us used to gather crowds when they were eating out in a restaurant some place and first the children would come and see them, then the old whose pace is slow and who are bent and hard to move away again and finally the parents or usually the mothers of the children would appear to call them away but would stay themselves and have a look at these long tall people with their pointed noses and strange coloured eyes and, 'by god', they had blond hair, most amazing and irritating of all. This restaurant would then have a lot more customers as usual and be crowded with people, hard to bear for the strangers trying to eat their meals. We only once attracted a real crowd of maybe 50 people but once we wanted to buy

something the whole place would respond in one way or another to our presence and it wasn't always easy to keep cool and even at times I decided against a buy because it caused such a stir up which stood in sharp contrast to the task we were undertaking like purchasing a pound of pairs (which are around 3 or 4 mao). We dropped by into another restaurant on the way back which was a moslem one and here I saw the biggest fish I have ever seen being served in a restaurant-it must have been a plate of about 50 cm and the head and tail of the fish were hanging over by another 10 cm each. We didn't have food there because there was no table free, so we went back to the hotel and had some food there, afterwards sat in the cafe-terria and talked the day over. I had made a discovery. I had seen a pair of eyes on this day the expression of which or rather the complete lack of any expression and emotion I had only witnessed once before in my life and never forgotten. At that time I was on a trip to Marocco and had just arrived in Tetouan where I found a hotel and went straight out again to look around the streets, which were filled with a fragrance of spices and herbs and a fairytale architecture and dark and lively people. It made me all very excited and trembling and I proceeded to the very heart of the old town with street restaurants and kebab shops and those famous tea houses where they serve a peppermint tea you will never forget for the intensity and freshness and richness of taste. I ordered a cup and sat down at a table and looked around, completely taken in by the strangeness and intensity of it all and suddenly I saw him. About 50 years of age by physical appearance but a million years by soul. He wore oriental habit and a fez on his head and everything was perfect and in place but there was just no life in him. So I thought. His eyes were pitchblack and were looking over the brim of his tea glass without any signs of seeing, seeing anything at all. They were completely directed inwards, but not by conscious will or effort to do so rather they were drawn inwards towards something that was so profoundly natural that it evaded will and reason and filled his being with indifference and obscurity (in the old greek sense of the word). I was immensely attracted by these eyes and their complete lack of anything mankind thinks is striving for: truth and clarity, understanding and compassion, reason and morality. Nothing of those showed in those eyes except one: there was a truth in them, the truth of human nature and its origin in the stream of life and the creature on this earth. Life and death was in these eyes, and it was one. Today I had seen them again, for the second time in my life, showing not only the old and deep roots of these people but also indicating how to rule a people which basically constitutes itself from a source not domitable by reason but, tragically, by force and power, being driven to act in such and such a way to bring a new lord into power. Now that this lord was dead things tended to become easier and more relaxed. This is how I feel about the country today, but things are still far from how they could be if...

Such was my discovery today.

Yennie's discovery at this day was that there were no manners and educational gaps, which really hurt her. People were rude and sometimes really offensive without that we had given them any cause to be so. Not really aggressive I mean but just rough and uncut (the uncut gem is an important term in philosophical taoism indicating a natural simplicity and beauty in a person-s. Zhuang Zi) but here Yennie was disappointed merely by the fact that education was so poor or when it showed it was doctrinal (we met other people at other times but such was her first impression. She also commented on the poverty of the people. It's true, the people are poor, but what they have now is enough to survive and it is better when everybody has a little bit than some have 90% of the people's property and 90% of the people have hardly anything so they sell their children and curse and beat their wives when they give birth to a daughter and not to a son. This was what has changed in the republic. Everyone has a little bit to get him through. It is not true. We have witnessed it and I will write about it. They are no great truths, though. It is just sad to know.

13. December 1981

We tried the museum again this day and were lucky-it was open. It covers the whole range of Chinese history, but especially this century, showing Krupp-cannons and revolutionary leaders like Li Da and Sun Yat Sen on pictures. Outside is a good collection of stone engravings, dating from very early times. Afterwards we took the bus into town and strolled around the market, where we saw some fish for sale like carp and several places at which dogmeat was sold. A variety of vegetables, pork and homegrown tobacco was also available. One pound of dogmeat was 3,80 yuan and a quarter of a duck about two yuan. What we saw in the department store yesterday called the Nan Fang Da Xia we noted some of the prices: a sawing machine for 160 yuan, the electrical equivalent for 240 yuan. Bicycles were sold on coupons from your working unit and in addition cost about 149 yuan. Television sets were sold for over 600 yuan and likewise the Chinese cameras like the Pearl River brand. I had bought one in Hongkong for only 175 yuan, brandnew in a Chinese department store, were luxury goods from China are much cheaper than in the country itself. In the afternoon we came by chance upon the island previously occupied by the French and English. It is called the Sha Mian island in Chinese and is well worth a visit for its staunch pure colonial style buildings in green and yellow and red, being the typical colours of the tropics, but now fading and in a delicate state of decay. There is a lot of construction there now and young kids playing football all over the place (there are no cars). I felt very good at this place. It reminded me of the books I had read when I was young and in my childhood like Hans Thoma and Kaestner and all those writers describing the games kids used to play in the 30s in the backyards and quiet streets, with the yelling and shouting and shuffling; it all looked very healthy to me, not only physically but moreover mentally. The children were strong and full of energy and I would have liked to join them in their game. Some small ones were using this stick to control the hoop, trundle it and running about in the sand yelling at people to get the hell out of their way, all this done barfoot and experiencing a pure sense of joy in a world of their own. I envied them in having such favourable conditions to exist and play their games on this island with practically no adult to tell them anything. Later we wandered around in the Yue Xiu Gong Yuan, a public park, where we had to pay to get in like in any other park in China. There were dead fish in the pond and a strange layer of something on the leaves of the bushes, dust and rubber and concrete from all the factories in town. We crossed the river in the evening on one of the bridges and walked along its bank. It seemed like a favoured place for young couples to date and the boys were really going at it, as Yennie observed. There were dark trees and only very little light from the street lamps shining through, so this was the ideal place for young lovers. There was a small ferry halfway between two bridges and we decided to return home, so we boarded the craft for 2 mao and crossed the river again, which was smooth and of a dark brown colour. We had seen a good deal of new faces today, selfconscious and single-minded, steadfast and of a sound mental condition, men and women alike, but the old were tired and worn out looking sometimes, haggard and bent. Still some of them were amazingly alert and lively and I bet they could still shoulder a bunch of bricks and help with construction works or walk 10 miles a day. This was my general impression today. That everyone was in a sound physical condition and generally in good shape; we did not see any fat people and there might still be a long way to go before you see a real fat Chinese again. Then you will know that things have changed, again.

14. December 1981

It was a quarter after six o'clock and the bus was already waiting for the passengers to take their seats. There weren't many of us going overland to Guilin and for some reason we had seats in the very front, where we could see everything ahead and wouldn't bounce so much as in the back. Yet whenever the driver would use his horn to warn somebody who hadn't grasped the understanding of speed and schedule yet (this species was mostly to be found in the countryside), it was completely deafening and it took the whole of the first day to get used to this horn. On the second day the ears were worn out and the impact was not that strong any more. The drivers were young and zealous and that was the way they drove this bus. It was fun. The land stretching out before us in a light brown colour, ploughed and planted by oxen and men like in the last two thousand years, not much had changed here. According to plan 80% should be under mechanical labour, but we only saw oxen and buffalos the whole day out in the fields, not a single tractor. I guess because it was winter and not much to do out there, so the mowers and the heavy gear stayed in the sheds and barns. We passed through many villages without the wiring for electricity or telephone and almost everywhere there was evidence of construction of some sort. Villagers building houses like they used to, for example, out of trampled on earth put between boards of wood provide the foundations for the new home, which is sometimes as seen one meter in diameter for those basic walls. On top of that there will be build a framework out of precious wood (which was taken out of and sold again in times of hardship) which provides the scaffold for the brickwork constructed now. These bricks were of the same material as the ground walls, compressed earth put into shape with a special type of square box type tool, done by hand of course. This area was quite poor I suppose and they didn't have those brickworks like in the north, whose output is of a low quality sometimes. In every village we came across some heaps of handcut mud bricks neatly piled up to dry faster and once or twice I saw small places like kilns to fire them, but that was not the rule.

When our bus passed Zhao Qing everybody made exclamations of wonder and surprise when we passed a beautiful lake with a pavillon in the middle, connected to the shore by one of the characteristic zigzag bridges. We asked the drivers what it was, but they themselves did not know, so they proposed to stop and have a look, what we did. The place turned out to be much more than a pavillon only. It was an old hotel still in use (a bed was 5 yuan per night), peacefully settled in the lake and if you wanted to you could have fished right from the window. We thanked the drivers for the stop and proceeded on our way to Wuzhou, where we spent the night. The roads were plain mud with gravel on top and good to drive on, but we also had some paved stretches which for reasons of their own were not what they promised to be on first sight. Around us all the land was cultivated, every little part of it. There were private gardens closer to the villages or within their walls themselves. The land was ploughed or being ploughed and looked bare and empty. Vegetation still was subtropical with large ferns and bamboo here and there, but there were no large woods to drive through or any kind of extreme of a manifestation of nature.

That night we checked into the hotel in Wuzhou for 1,25 yuan for a bed with three other people in the room, men and women separated of course. Wuzhou is located at the confluence of the Yu Jiang and the Shui Gui Jiang and for that reason used to be an important trading post for the two provinces Gungdong and Guangxi. The British had an embassy here serving the many missionaries in the area and along the two rivers. We had a stroll around town and looked into a restaurant in which you could order small deer, armadillo, fox or turtle. All these animals were on display and you just had to choose if you wanted to have the turtle for a soup or cooked. I don't know any recipe for fox, I suppose one has to be very careful in the preparatory phase. We did not ask for prices but I know that the armadillo was about 35 yuan. That restaurant had four floors, the highest being the most decorated and stylish, the lower you descended the more ugly it became. We had

a surprise when I spotted Budweiser beer on the shelves of the fourth floor and despite the high price we shared a tin. This kind of a four story restaurant we never again saw in China and it was strange and out-of-the-place in Wuzhou, a place never mentioned in the official tour guides in the republic. It was also here that we saw people in rags and tatters, hay in their hair and barefoot, definitely ill equipped to weather this kind of temperature. It was around 5 ' degrees above freezing point.

15. December 1981

The next day on the bus did not bring us much of a new scenery until noon. Around this time we saw the vegetation diminishing, leaving no subtropical feelings; everything was completely under control you might say, leaving no room for trees or animals to live. Next we came within sight of those weird looking mountains, rising abruptly from the plain. They were not very high, maybe 400 m at the most, but they would soar up like a sheer cliff, some standing straight and others bent over, broken away and crippled, old and lonely. Every one of them was standing for himself, seldom touched each other even at the foot and they just looked to me like rows and rows of old dried bones springing forth from a flat and withered land, a skeleton of a country. They had a purplish brown colour, the stone being cracked and rough. The farmers cultivating the soil had done so over thousands of years and here in the nakedness of winter the country showed its real face. The ground was ploughed right to the foot of each hill, encircling it and rolling on to it like the waves of the sea, soundlessly heaving around the old stone, stopped short in motion and in time. It was so beautiful to look at these waves of earth rolling over the dry lands with the rocks protruding from this sea of human labour. In Japanese gardens, who were designed by monks, you could see this spectacle of toil converted to another scale of make and purpose. The famous gardens show carefully raked earthen patches of land with small rocks in its middle, signifying motion and stillness, and it belongs to a meditative moment to discover the motion and fluidum in a piece of rock and the stillness and calm in the little waves of earth surrounding them. Here it was where it came from, on a much larger scale than its abstraction in Japan, where so many things Chinese were further developed and refined, inheriting a meaning of their own now, well above in spirit than what they used to be in their own native country. Here it was real and hard and you could touch it with your fingers and it was not for food for the soul but for food for the stomach, demanding quite another kind of effort than the spiritual one to think and contemplate.

The bus station in Guilin is on the main street in Guilin and it was not far to the next hotel, which ~~was~~ called after the city itself. The room was 14 yuan, shower included, but we had to get the water in buckets from a huge cauldron on the same floor that looked like it was going to explode any minute. There was no heating, so we kept on moving and pretended to be busy. There wasn't much to do though and after having a steaming shower we went out into the streets looking for a place to eat. This was easy enough since there were a lot of small restaurants in the neighbourhood and we had a good meal of fish, meat, vegetables and rice and tea for about 2,60 yuan. There were the same little cages in front of their doors like in Wuzhou, but a greater variety of animals to order: the armadillo, young deerlike animals with soft blue eyes, a type of racoon, the turtles and all sorts of snakes, which are best to eat in winter since they provide you with a healthy amount of protein not being available to you if there is no grain stored away for the cold season. I had eaten snake in Taiwan before and I found the consistence of its flesh being halfway between fish and meat, just as one would expect from its history in evolution. With the right spices it can taste very good and one does not get the labourous fishbones with it.

Guilin lies in the province of Guangxi, where 80% of the people are of the Zhuang tribe.⁴

Guilin is on the upper reaches of the Li River. It was founded under Qin Shi Huang Di around 214 b.c.; it developed as a result of the building of the Ling Qu canal, who connects by extension the Pearl River with the Jiang Ze Jiang. Under the Ming it became the provincial capital, and remained the capital until 1914, when Nan Ning took over. The town was a revolutionary stronghold during the anti-Japanese war; printing houses, newspapers, acting companies took refuge there, and the population grew rapidly. Guilin is now more and more becoming an industrial town, but it still has preserved a little of its own old charm with white low houses and tree-lined streets. The place is world-famous for its landscape and many Chinese poets of old paid reference to it by writing poems and painting distinctive pictures. The underlying rock in this part of Guangxi is limestone.

16. December 1981

People here on the street are stout and enduring in their appearance, and the women in their working habits look confident and able. Things here are not so expensive as in Canton, measured by Chinese standard. To us it is all quite cheap, but we don't buy anything here, we will do this on the way back. We did some walking around town, but it was drizzling and cold. There isn't really very much to see here except of course the experience of a fantastic scenery, so we laid low today, made some pictures of people and houses and made the acquaintance of a Chinese teacher who was willing to change our dollars into Ren Min Bi, which is the money of the Chinese and not the currency they give us in the bank when we want to change. There was a black market here for western goods and money could be exchanged at a favourable rate. The main object was to change foreign exchange currency into Ren Min Bi, which served both partners. Let's say we changed 100 \$ US in the bank at a rate of 1.70, which means we received 170 Wai Hui Qian (for. ex. cur.) on the teller. We left the bank with this amount of money and met this friend of ours in a restaurant of one of his friends and would hand him 100 WHQ for which we would get in return between 125 and 135 RMB. That was according to the black market rate of the town (other towns have different rates; in Canton it was 100 to 150, which was a very good deal), but what was the good point for the Chinese in giving us so much in addition just to get the currency designed for exclusive use by foreigners? It is like that: in almost every town where tourists visit there is a special store called the Friendship Store (or Shop), in which the government or the local authorities displays a variety of goods and products it wishes the tourists from other countries to buy. The things on sale range from a bicycle to sawing machines, and from textiles of a quality one is not likely to find in an ordinary shop mainly for Chinese customers. Besides, one finds antiques of some value and generally products of superior quality than in the street. In these shops (some of which really are amazing in their quantity of articles for sale) only WHQ is accepted, though we sometimes also paid in RMB, but never larger sums of money. If a Chinese now has some of this sort of WHQ he can (He could; explanation follows) walk right in and buy the things he desires like a Japanese camera for example. Or a bicycle, so he does not have to wait for a year to collect the necessary coupons for it. Such is the advantage of being in possession of a foreigner's money. There must be actually a lot more to it than only that because people also used to change any kind of currency into RMB and they would not be so stupid as to go to the bank and change it there into WHQ, because they were sure to be asked about the origin of the Deutsch Mark the Chinese wanted to get WHQ for. There were some channels running underground, and some of them had connections to Hongkong, which ~~wasn't~~ wasn't so far away after all. As I heard towards the end of April this year from a fellow

student who also visited Guilin this is all over and done away with. Neither in Canton nor in Guilin, as she said, could she change any money in the street because the police had launched a major attack on the illegal money traffickers and the government has now put the death penalty on anybody Chinese in possession of WHQ, maybe cadres excluded. This is, if it is really true, a drastic measure and shows in a way the spirit and economic distress of the People's Republic of China.

Concerning this minority people of the Zhuang we have seen today that they indeed seem to observe their own rules and keep their traditions alive: the woman was walking exactly three paces behind her husband, carrying a little baby on her back. She stopped when he stopped and resumed her steps when he was going on. What kind of feelings this might provoke in the Chinese men whose wives now are equal by law and as I have often seen now sometimes even more than their husbands equal in terms of physical labour and family matters?

17. December 1981

Today we moved to the other hotel just a few blocks down on the same street. We had looked into it the day before and found it much more modern and up to standard. It was heated but when I asked for the dormitory I was told that there was no dorm, but that we could have a double room for 36 yuan. I said it was too expensive for us, and then I was asked how much I would be willing to pay, so I said 15 yuan, which was one yuan more than we were paying right now in the Guilin Hotel. My offer was accepted, to our surprise and joy, I must admit. I had made my offer to a tour guide from Hongkong who had been booking a whole floor and apparently some people had not shown up, so their room was free to be given away to anyone asking for it, and the tour guide put the money we paid into her own pocket. So everybody was pleased and we finally had a very comfortable room with running hot water and carpet on the floor.

In this hotel we saw an advertisement about a boat trip to Yang Shuo, six hours down the river and back by bus or car for 40 yuan, a month's wages for the average Chinese worker and also quite a lot for us. So we missed to see the spectacular scenery along the river Li, which is so much spoken of when Guilin comes up in conversation. We bought a ticket to Kunming this day for 26 yuan (the two of us), without sleeper. In the evening Yennie had a conversation with a young man around 30 who boasted that he was not too shy to wear the traditional Chinese jacket called Tang Shi Mian Ao, which indeed I have not seen anybody else wear in China. During the day we also had made some contact with the owners of a small repair shop. My pack was being repaired on a strong sawing machine when we were invited to come inside to warm up beside the burning stove. They had a large family and the grandmother was still going strong, running the place and doing the repair work. We asked how much they earned and in return were asked how much we paid for the hotel per night. We told them that it was 7.50 per night and the grandmother replied that she would have to work for a whole week to make that kind of money. One sometimes wonders what people live on, and to this question we got some answer later on in Xian and Chengdu. We had a special meal today that was something like a broth or a thick soup which tasted ok. and filled us up for 1 mao and 2 fen⁵ each, which gives you some idea about survival on a low budget in China. Still we met others who really did not have a penny of their own, but about those I will write later, one thing after the other. The next day was

to be our all-out sightseeing day, compensating us for the trip on the river that we thought could not afford.

18. December 1981

I was wrong. About sightseeing and making a tour today. We both felt sick and weak today, so there was not much energy in us to walk around all the time. Our hotel was called Dan Gui hotel, or Osmanthus in English and we stayed inside most of the time. In the afternoon we left the room and had a walk along main street, where we discovered a place for renting bicycles (Zhong Shan Road 500s) for 4.80 yuan per day, open from 8 to 5. We had good food again, some of the local dishes like Su Yi Dan and a special kind of fish, together with soy bean sprouts and a soup and rice for 3.30 yuan. Now, during the winter time, everybody uses those charcoal burners. It actually is not really charcoal, but bituminous coal, which not only smells and makes your mind reel when lit in a closed room but which also sends its particles in the air and they settle wherever they can get a hold on, that is the furniture and our noses, that breath them in. You can't just wash it away with water, so whenever we went to a restaurant we would have to wipe the entire table surface with toilet paper from the hotel in order to be able to lean on it or put our hands down on it and not get a black smear of fat coal ash. We used our own chopsticks. Though we had not met anybody with stomach trouble we heard from a traveller in Hongkong that water on the trains was not advisable to drink, and from the tap in the hotel there was no need to drink from it because every day we would get a hot-water bottle and we made our tea with it. This tea was Gui hua Cha, a tea named after the cassia tree that was growing here in the city and which tasted delicious. The cassia tree is the tree indicating wealth and honour in Chinese tradition, and there is a nice air about them in the spring, as I was told. However, since this was the beginning of winter, they had the same layer of dust and coal on them like everything else.

Yennie had made the acquaintance with a young woman from Qing Hai, who was travelling with a tour of representatives from minorities (she herself belonged to the Zang people) and they spent the evening talking in the young woman's room, who by the way was dressed in her traditional clothes, colourful and richly embroidered. Yennie told me later that she had been travelling for one month already and that there was another month to go, covering the most important and beautiful places in the wide country; what was more of a surprise was that most of them came from richer lineage and noble descendency, being the upper class in their tribes, but that the Chinese government paid for the entire trip, lasting two months and taking them to hotels, which were rated first choice. We met them later again in the north and Yennie and the young Zang woman were exchanging gifts. They were primarily travelling by plane and enjoying themselves, I believe.

There are all in all over fifty minorities in China, and we caught a glimpse of maybe ten of them. Since we did not go to Xin Jiang in the far north west I reckon we missed some of the very interesting people of the nation, but the opportunity might come up again, who knows. The trip by train would have taken three days to and the same amount of time to get back from Urumqi to, say, Peking, only to be caught up in snowstorms and exposed to temperatures reaching 35 degrees minus, which we were not equipped for. There is a cold weather school in Fairbanks, Alaska; maybe I try that some day. Another trip, famous for its inspiring scenery, is the boat journey down the Jiang Ze river through the Wu gorges, and we didn't do that either for the same reasons. We were not really on a holiday tour but it was more something like an immense cultural adventure and besides I was collecting material about the fields I am interested in.

19. December 1981

Here we were today. It was our last day in Guilin and we would leave town around 7.30 pm on the train to Kunming. In the hotel we made contact with a driver who said he would show us around town in the afternoon for twelve yuan. We accepted the fare and checked out of our room, left the luggage with the receptionist and drove off, edging our way slowly but steadily through the crowd of people walking the street. We visited some hills in the vicinity and met a lot of Chinese comrades, who obviously were on leave of absence from their working unit. We asked our driver about them and he told us that most of them would report to their danwei that there was a relative that was very sick and the whole family was coming together right in Guilin, so it was imperative that they had to go to, a wish that was granted more often than not since family ties still play a large roll in the southern parts of China. The thing was that there was no relative in Guilin and consequently no family meeting. The comrade only wanted to get away from his job and have a little vacation. This was one of the reasons why there were so many Chinese from all over the country to line up for the Qi Xing Dong, with their cameras and the soldiers with their sweethearts. We visited the cave, the attractions of which were explained by a nice but very cold looking girl of about twenty years of age. What struck me most was not that she did not seem to notice my presence, being the only foreigner in the group but that she was apparently very intelligent, and something like an intellectual. Her attitude towards this job of explaining the cave and making sarcastic jokes about some features of it was something to be done as a duty and nothing more, but it was certainly not her real occupation, if she had any other, which I doubt. I think that she was suspended from her studies and sent to the countryside to get her and her criticism out of the way, and what is more out of the way than letting her be attached to a cave in some tourist spot where everybody was more out for pleasure than for the realities of life. This is only speculation, however, but it is common practice in China to send young people out of town to the countryside for a number of reasons, one of them being that there isn't work for all of them in the cities and another one reason is to get rid of dangerous criticism voiced by the students and other members of society who have managed to keep their minds clear and unsullied. 7

The Chinese obsession with food became quite evident when our guide explained forms and shapes of the caves interior in terms of: this looks like an apple, this is the mangopole made up of calcium sulfat, here is the three monkey's rice bowl and other silly association with foodstuffs popular in the country. We never heard the old legends concerning the names of the various hills and truly unique scenery spots around and in Guilin itself.

The most impressive of them is maybe the hill called Solitary Beauty (a nice name, that) which stands in the middle of the city, overlooking the nearby river with its houseboats and junks tied to each other. Fu Bo mountain is also well worth a climb up to its lofty summit, commanding a marvellous view over the other mountains of which I will name a few here meaning to let the reader guess their shapes: there are Tunnelled Hill, Elephant Trunk Hill (these two actually should change names since Tunnelled Hill looks exactly like the enormous head of a mammoth with its trunk curled up into the open mouth) Old Man Hill, Screen Hill, Pagoda Hill and Camel Hill, which veritably has the shape of a camel with two humps. We took numerous pictures today and were quite content with the outcome. To the end of our excursion we wanted to have a look at the Yu Hill in the north of the city, but the driver refused to go there because, as he argued, there was nothing there to see and besides,

it was beyond the trodden paths of the ordinary and he could not take any responsibility for us. I told him I was well aware of the fact that the hill was not one of the major places for tourists to go but nevertheless I desired to go there and if he did not want to take the responsibility for us then I would take it for all of us, which left him speechless, since I had closely come to violate one of the most important rules set by the Chinese government for the foreign tourist, that is: you cannot go where we do not allow you to go, for reasons hidden in the misty Chinese officials' mind. Guilin was a place to go and be but since this hill was close to the city's periphery it was not really a good thing to go there with a representative of the fearful society. We did convince him in the end that it was all right and not really out of the ordinary, so we managed to get there. We did not intend to climb up hill but just took a stroll around its foot and then returned to the waiting car which brought us back to our hotel.

After some early dinner we went to the railway station in the northern part of the city, where we waited for the train. We had our tickets, but as it would take thirty hours to get to Kunming we also needed a sleeper's ticket and we were in for a surprise and our first relations with people from Shanghai. But first I must append a fact about the caves and hills here: many of them have been held in great respect for hundreds of years and inscriptions have been carved in stone tablets fixed to the walls of the caves expressing awe and admiration to the wonders of nature. The writing styles is varied, some of it was in Li Shu of the six dynasty period, some in the small seal script, skillfully carved and painted in green usually. The Buddhist influence was also evident with one hill being ornamented with a mass of little Buddhas and niches for the candles, hewn out of the rock and still being in a good condition.

At the railway station, which was a large modern building we were received by some employee and ushered into a separate waiting room on the first floor. The doors of this room were opened first when the train, coming from Shanghai and with its final destination being Chengdu, arrived at the station. There had been a great reform concerning the trains and its personnel had been given some kind of a brainwash. This was because there were great delays and poor service, together with corruption cases. The two people on this train now, they must have been overlooked, I believe, and for some reasons had escaped the great cleaning. We were taken to the first class coach and told that there were no more second class sleepers available, so we would have to stay where we were and pay the price. At this point of affairs we dealt with the man serving this particular coach and there weren't many people around. The difference in price between the first and the second class is about two months wages for a Chinese, so it was well worth arguing about. And this we did. Finally the conductor supervising the whole train came and we thought "fine, now we will be able to talk to a responsible person and not to such a sly fox," but rats, the conductor was of the same breed and he now offered us the first class ticket to a price well over a hundred WHQ. We said "no, thank you" and told him about a second class sleeper. Now he was going down with the price of the first class one. I did not believe my ears. He had been talking a lot in Shanghainese to the serviceman and now they had agreed on a price they would give us, their foreign special guests. We got angry and Yennie was mad at them. It took over one hour during which we were sitting all the time in a first class compartment that we did not want. Finally they gave in to our persisting demand and gave us what we wanted. I am quite convinced they were looking forward to putting some of those foreigners' money into their own pocket, otherwise how could they offer us so different prices on the first class? They really looked like crooks to me and behaved like it. Well, we had our sleepers for the following two nights.

20. th December 1981

The train was not a new one, it was not clean and it was loud. We had bought the loudspeaker with the ticket. I had forgotten about them. At six in the morning they started, wishing everybody a hearty good day which sent you sprawling to the floor or at least made you sit upright on your bed bumping into the one on top of you. The early bird catches the worm, as the saying goes. However, there was no worm to catch at this time of day (he still must have been asleep I guess), so I let the women assemble the sheets and slept on. The morning passed, we did some writing and talking with fellow passengers, who were shy and curious at the same time, which always is an awkward mixture. The landscape we were passing was rivers and brown dry land. We must have passed through a country with many minorities, because so far to the south live the Miao, the Zhuang, the Yi and the Yao, interesting people altogether. I would have liked to get myself a horse and with a good friend roam the lands. Alas, this is not possible. The railway line passes the province Guizhou, which for foreigners is off limits. The restaurant cars food was edible but nothing more. We would arrive in Kunming the next day early in the morning.

21. th December

It was six o'clock in the morning and still dark when we arrived at Kunming. We took the bus to the Kunming Hotel and tried to check in. It was still too early we were told and we waited for about another two hours to get a room. The dorm had the day before been occupied by a group of Chinese from Hongkong. The receptionist was very friendly and helpful and found us a cheap room in the building, which we liked almost instantly. I mean both the room and the hotel were very good, a lot of wooden panelling and comfortable beds, which we were in need for after thirty hours on the train. What was more of interest to me was that there was a desk and an armchair to work with, so I really felt at home in this room. We paid about 17 yuan for it and it was worth it. The style of the hotel inside was heavy socialist style, taken over from the Russian friends who used to dwell in a sort of soft and sickening luxury, but there was still finesse about it and not just bluntness like in other big hotels we were to see.

A little about Kunming's history.

The town was founded under the Han dynasty. Yi Zhou Jun was founded in 109 bc. and changed its name several times during the dynasties that followed. Little is known about the early history of Kunming, though the lake and its surroundings seem to have played an important part in the economy in the economy of the region from an early date. According to the History of the Later Han the lake was over 200 li round (one li = 0,5 km). It was wide and deep on the side where the river flowed into it, and it appeared to drain its waters by overflowing, why it was called Dian Chi Lake, the lake which overflows. It was surrounded by a stretch of plain, with fisheries and salt-pans which were a great source of riches to their owners; gold and silver mines were also exploited. The men of Kunming were considered brave and generous and the rich governors handed their post down from one generation to the other. Under the Sui and at the beginning of the Tang, it was still under Chinese rule. But in 775 or thereabouts, the Meng family from the kingdom of Nan Zhao seized it, fortified it, and called it Tuo Dong Cheng, enlarged Eastern Town. From 809 it was the secondary capital of the kingdom of Da Li, known as the Eastern Capital and finally the Main Capital. The town was south-east of the present one and a royal palace was built there, in 871.

During the Five Dynasties and under the Song, the town was part of the kingdom of Da Li. In 1274, the Mongols took the town by storm; in 1276, it became the headquarters of a department, Zhong Qing Fu. In 1280, the governor general of Yunnan

settled there, and in 1288, the princes of Yunnan chose as their only capital. Marco Polo visited the town and describes it in some detail. In 1382, the Ming took Zhong Qing Fu; a new town was founded north-west of the old one, a wall was built around it and it was called Yunnan Fu. Its site was to remain until the same until the present day. When the Qing came to power, Yunnan Fu was one of the towns which was long in declaring their allegiance to the new dynasty; it supported Wu San Gui, who was sent to Yunnan Shen in 1659 to put down the opposition to the Qing and succeeded so only in 1681. The town was heavily damaged in the 19th century during the Moslem revolt; it was besieged by the Sultan of Da Li several times between 1859 and 1861, and again in 1868; large numbers of old buildings were destroyed. In 1910, the population was so badly decimated by the rebellion that it consisted only of 45,000 inhabitants. It is now an important center of road (the Burma Road and roads leading to Vietnam), rail and air communications. There is some machine-building industry and optical industry. Besides it is the center for all the minorities in Yunnan and there are several stores selling homemade articles from the people living near the borders.

We stayed in Kunming only this day and were walking around town to get a good impression of it, and that's exactly what we got; the place was very new and clean, its layout was simple and easy to follow. The streets were built with plates of smooth stone, white and square. Trees line the sidewalks here like in every other town and I remember that there were many army vehicles, since Kunming is a major garrison in China, being close to the border. We also heard that there were many Vietnamese in the city. What really made me feel comfortable were not the army vehicles of course but the old part of town with its small alleys, red brick pavement and white-washed little houses which undoubtedly showed Moslem influence in the way they were ornamented and the shape of their doorways and windows. We noticed many cinemas playing Indian movies, but there was no museum to visit. The university is a good one as far as I was told later in Shanghai. In the streets we saw some people selling their homegrown tobacco, which was smoked in bamboo waterpipes, and I am sure it had some effect on the smoker. I heard from various people that in some provinces hashish and marijuana was cultivated and smoked, which created problems sometimes with the authorities. It is not usually the Han people who smoke but some of the half Sinitized people would do it, maybe to prevent themselves from becoming completely overpowered by the strong domination of the Han. There is special food in Kunming and one should not miss to try the kind of cheese they do out of sheep or goat milk, I am not really sure which it is. We visited two main attractions in town. One of them is the zoo. I had not been to any zoo in the people's republic and I was deluded by our guidebook which said that the Kunming zoo has some rare species of animals only native to Yunnan. The Chinese are not very prudish about how to treat animals and this zoo was a sad example of it. Cages were extremely small and bare, not even a piece of dried wood for the leopard to wet his claws. In another cage there were about two hundred small birds put together, with the result that you could see some dead ones lying on the concrete floor. It was sad and altogether depressing. Close to the zoo ~~and~~ once it had formed one unity I suppose was a rather large and well preserved temple complex. There was a little pond in its middle with a pavilion, and two main halls with Buddha statues and on the backside of the second a large piece of a wooden fresco elaborately carved depicting Monkey's adventures, very vivid and with much emotion showing on the faces of the figures.

A fact that pleased me and without doubt was in the intention of its constructors: they had chosen the right spot and done the right layout for the temple. This may sound presumptuous on my behalf, but it occurred to me when we were leaving the grounds the actual temple and the pond with its pavillon occupied and were walking to its real entrance (we had entered the premises from the back, passing through a small gate with a ticket booth) on a broad evenly paved way leading through several high and old gates still in good condition. My point is that the way was leading us slightly uphill, and we first perceived what outside the main gate was going on when we were standing on its threshold, noticing the noise and the buzzing in the old style street with low white houses and so on. So when you wished to enter the temple via the main gate you would descend slowly towards its inner halls and holy houses, being cut off from any signs of the world outside almost immediately after entering the gate.³

22nd December 1981

We felt reluctant to leave our room and the friendly place this morning and it was not until twelve o'clock sharp that we finally said good bye to it. Anyway, we would be back after Christmas, which we wanted to spend in Shi Lin about 135 km to the south of Kunming. We managed to get the last seats on the bus there and left town from its western station (xi zhan). The ticket was 3.50 RMB. We had trouble with our luggage since the busdrivers are really reluctant to put it on the roof where there is actually a big frame for carrying goods, but the drivers were simply too lazy to put the packs and bags up there. So everything was piled up in the front near the engine after the principle of light stuff underneath and the heavy gear on top. People here can be of such a profound stupidity you won't believe it. Only once before have I seen such stupidity, while I was travelling with the bus through Turkey I noticed a creature beside the road trotting at a leisurely pace, stopping once in a while to have a closer look at the amazing things being exhibited for sale on the sidewalk. His lower lip was hanging close to his chin and there was no trace of comprehension about what was going on outside himself in his eyes, which were dull and restless in a way. He must have come to Istanbul merely by accident, I thought, he belongs to a very very uncultivated country with no civilization whatsoever surmounting the stage of how to feed himself. I was shocked and taken aback by the fact that such a human being should still be existing. Now here in China we saw them all over the place, the Dummies, as we called them, slow to respond and composing the very lowest class of Chinese, never to be reached by any educational program. They are numerous, we met them in every single place we visited, in the middle of the street relieving themselves and forgetting to close their fly, or wandering around the railway stations, staring at strangers with those deficient eyes, with their dull minds trying to figure out what was going on. Forgotten by the state and outcasts of society, new or old. There were so many of them, alas.

Sitting in the bus we had a journey of about 3 hours and 40 minutes, for the first time seeing snow in China, but they were only dirty patches, remnants of a week ago as we were told. The trip was very interesting and we saw a good piece of the landscape of southern China. It was a cold mountainous scenery, yellow-brown flanks with sparse vegetation (some peaks going up to 3000 m), deep valleys with narrow rivers now during the dry season and every little patch of land reasonably flat was used for agriculture. There were no animals visible, a fact that struck me hard in the region called the cradle of the Chinese civilisation between the Jang Ze and the Yellow River, where man has taken complete control of its counterpart in nature and it looked to me like it had been wiped out entirely. Down here in the mountains I did not quite believe this since it was winter and animals tend to hide from

the cold or migrate to the south and then come back again if they had a place to live at, which must be the case with those mountains here but which is doubtful in the north. In Guilin I had seen a woman trying to sell a wild cat to one of the restaurants, but when they inspected her the cat was already dead. So there must be some wildlife out there, I thought, but we didn't see so much as one of the big birds usually hunting in the mountains for small game. What we see was a railway line cutting through the rock and following the slope of a mountain. We were driving down below on the street when suddenly I looked up and saw a train coming towards us on a track not visible to me on the steep side of the mountain we were just passing. I really marvelled at this wonder of construction. The track was high up on the mountain and when we came back the same way I was looking for it hoping to make pictures of a train following its course but there was no train coming and consequently I did not see where the line was going. All I had seen was a dark-green ribbon pulling along on a mysteriously fixed course too high to count even its cars. Passing many small villages we noticed again the poverty of its inhabitants, having no electricity or telephone, living in houses made out of the very material like the earth around them, dark brown houses with a small court in front of them.

Shi Lin means Stone Forest in English. We arrived there around 5 o'clock in the afternoon and inquired about hotels, learning that there were two of them. Shi Lin is actually only a term for a formation of rocks lying in the territory of the Yi tribe, who has a small village there, which in itself may be called very different in the native tongue. We choose the cheaper one of the two hotels which was located on a low hill overlooking the whole area and in the evenings we would have the most beautiful sunsets. When checking in we were told that we did not have the proper permission to stay, so we had to go down and cross the little bridge which links the public road with the Stone Forest itself and find the police station. It was dark by now but we could make out the light coming from the house so we were doing all right and got our permission; The hotel, which was called the Shi Lin Fan Dian, was almost empty and we were the only foreigners living there. The room was 3.60 yuan a night for the two of us, with showers being in the court and the toilet around the building. This was spartan and without any comfort, which meant it was primarily used by Chinese. It has a little shop and a restaurant in the adjoining building which is inexpensive and quite good. Shi Lin is about 1600 m above sea level and has a very pleasant climate as we were to find out the next days - Christmas 1981. There is no heating in this hotel and at this time of year it was nevertheless around 5 degrees during the night. We could not get a stove from the reception so we went to bed rather early that day. It was so quiet outside and peaceful, after all the city noise and movement this was the place to be.

23rd December 1981

Shi Lin is divided into Xiao Shi Lin and Da Shi Lin, meaning smaller and greater Stone Forest. This first day we visited Xiao Shi Lin which only recently has been developed and made suitable for the person used to a path to walk around places. We did not stick to the paths, however, but followed our own nose and instinct. The area is not very big, maybe one and a half miles long and a mile wide, with patches around its main concentration on the hills surrounding the actual Stone Forest. The rock is limestone and very rough to climb, with sharp edges. Its colour is grey and the highest columns are 30 m and higher. The rock formation itself developed at the time when there was a large lake covering the whole area some thousands of years ago, and then, when the waters subsided they left a grotesque field of rocks standing high side by side, erect and like sharp-pointed needles shooting into the clear skies above.

There were small patches of fields among the rocks sometimes, now just showing its brown soil and some small tips of a sort of grain remaining from the last harvest. We frequently noticed woman of the Yi passing by on small paths carrying huge bundles of hay on their backs and they looked pretty with their light blue embroidered dresses falling over the knees and ankles. They make some business here with handmade textiles like bags and belts and shirts, displaying the goods along side the little lake, which with its northeastern side formed the natural boundary to their village. We went and had a look at it in the afternoon. It maybe consisted of 60 houses made out of those mud bricks now being washed smooth by many rains. There were a lot of pigs running about with black backs and pink bellies which made them look extremely funny. Buffalos were driven through the ways and dogs barked at us from almost every corner. We felt uneasy and made our way slowly on ~~the mud and the dirt~~. The schoolhouse was the biggest building in the village, but stood somewhat outside and faced the main street leading to the bridge with its ticket counter. I sometimes after our visit to the village did not cross the bridge to get to the Stone Forest but passed the school into the village to avoid having to buy the ticket and getting more directly to where I wanted to go. In the trees corn was hanging to dry and I had seen this before on a picture scroll in the Gu Gong museum in Taipei dating from the Yuan period. Wooden carts with full wheels made out of the same material were still in use and stood in their sheds. Red pepper was hanging from the sides of the houses, we would get enough of that in Sichuan we believed. Concerning food we found the Yunnan Huo Tui (smoked Yunnan ham) delicious and lived basically on peanuts and da mi (rice), being served in every restaurant as a dish beside the main courses. In places like this you have to go to bed early because there isn't much to do once you are back at the hotel and that is what we did that evening.

24 th December 1981

The weather was beautiful today with sunshine and temperature rising up to 16 degrees Celsius. It was Christmas so I invited Yennie to the other hotel's restaurant for lunch and we paid 7 yuan to be served a meal with five or six courses and rice. We had so much left over from the Yunnan cheese in particular that we wrapped it up in paper and had enough bites for the whole next week. It was very good food. The hotel called the Zhong Guo Lu Guan also had a coffeeshop to sit and drink whatever beverages the desire was. A room in this hotel was 18 yuan with student identity card and 23 yuan without. If one is an inscribed student at one of China's universities (which include Taiwan) the costs for travelling may be cut into half. Just like the military ~~and~~ get reduced fares on the train and pay low prices in the hotels. We did not have any such certificate stating that we were students with us at the time so we would have to pay higher normal price. Only once could we convince the receptionist of a hotel that we were students and were given a room cheaper than usual.

In the afternoon we discovered the larger part of the Stone Forest with its winding paths and small deep green lake. Every outstanding top or rock has its name and there are signs guiding the tourist through this veritable maze. Army soldiers walked along with cameras dangling from the neck and we saw some Chinese from Hongkong but the whole scene was peaceful and sometimes the rocks would resound from laughter of people well ahead of us. Some path eventually leads to the top of a certain formation and we had to watch out for crevices and sharp edges. On difficult passages some wise stone mason had hewn handles out of the living rock and whoever has touched carved limestone in his live knows the feeling of exquisite smoothness of the material. Here it was not only smoothness but also the feeling of security which made you hold onto

those neatly carved handles (by all means a much more fundamental necessity), touching and perceiving a quality in the stone difficult to imagine if you don't know its nature. This would be the ideal place for sculpturers to form and shape works of art under the free skies of heaven and it would not be a drawback to the place if there were any fancy sculptures standing around and holding you in awe and perception. Nobody has done so yet and all carvings that have been made are the handles and some calligraphy here and there, having a quality of their own.

We had changed the room today, now living in a nicer one on the top floor of the three storey hotel and we were overlooking the entire valley at our feet. We had found some beer in the store and on this Christmas evening were sitting on the wall of a water reservoir opposite the house watching the sun set, eating peanuts and drinking beer, taking things easy. Yennie had given me so much before and we were so happy with each other there was no need for formal exchange of presents on a fixed day of year, since exchange between us has taken place all the time, materially and spiritually, and still does by the time I write these pages which by the way are donated to Yennie and her family. The whole thing is getting out of hand, however, since this is going to be a real book and not just some notes as I had anticipated at the beginning. There is so much to write and it's fun to do it. Anyway, today we decided that we had to leave Shi Lin and consequently it was our last night there in the quietness and above the singular landscape of southern Yunnan.

25 th December 1981

The bus left at around three o'clock in the afternoon so we had some time to make pictures and we had another good meal in the hotel down in Shi Lin proper. The weather was getting warmer and warmer for some reason and while I was walking I left my shirt open. The ride back with the bus took us along the same route we had come three days before and another feature of the villages scattered in the countryside came to my mind. In Guargi we had been able to notice the little ponds forming a substantial unit in the villages for breeding ducks and providing water for the private garden - besides, it is nice and can cool down a hot summer's evening to have a small lake in the hamlet - but here while passing through them we did not see this kind of pond, hardly saw any water at all. Whether this is because it was winter or out of another reason I can not make out; I think the people were just so much poorer than their fellowmen in other provinces that they could not afford the ducks. But that does not stand on very firm grounds since a little duck is maybe only two or three yuan, not much to start breeding them. It had just been nice to see the ducks by the ponds and hearing their chattering, being watched by a small boy or finally driven home by the grandfather with the long pole to prevent them from going on the street, so we were missing them here. Back in the good old days every german community used to have its pond and the ducks and times did not seem to be so pushy as today, at least in the countryside, where the sun is ruling over life and the crops.

Kunming is called the city of eternal spring. When we finally arrived there for the second time during our journey it was already dark and quite cool. We bought a ticket for the next day to Chengdu in Sichuan, 23 hours away by train. The railway line is a fairly new one, linking China with its neighbors in the south and going all the way up to Peking. Connections are excellent in the new China. We stayed in the same Hotel in Kunming and paid 17 yuan for a nice room (I believe its the only kind of room they have in this hotel). The train costs 18.50 per person and again we did not manage to buy a sleeper ticket in advance. But this time we were lucky, very lucky indeed.

26 th December 1981

The train for Chengdu was leaving at 19.50 in the evening. This gave us enough time for another stroll through town. I was looking for a pair of shoes and finally bought some, stout boots made for export to the United States with a thick sole to prevent the cold from freezing the toes. On this tour we came through a lot of interesting streets like one exclusively lined by tea houses with attractive old people sitting over their glasses listening to the story-teller in the front of the counter. There were some characters sitting around which for sure would be able to tell a story at least as catching as the one being told by the entertainer, whose face had a thousand wrinkles and a forceful mouth as one might well imagine. Then there was another street for the sellers of dofu, another one for vegetables and white rabbits, who, when sold to a customer, were stripped off their skin and slaughtered right on the spot. In another street we saw pigeons being sold or traded, along with a number of other small domestic birds. The keeping of birds at home, an old passion among the Chinese, was forbidden during the cultural revolution, but now it looked like it was becoming alive again. Large crowds gathered around each salesman with his cages and quick hands grabbing the nervous birds.

The antique shops in China are always of special interest and the one in Kunming was no exception. Prices were high with some vases being sold at around 1900 yuan or more. The articles were not older than from the Qing dynasty, i.e. the last three hundred years.

We bought a lot of tasty cakes and fruits to make our long train ride a more comfortable one but it was hardly necessary. On DongFeng Dong Lu is a cooking school where many people go and eat at a cheap price. We had the Huo Guo there (fire pot with fish and meat and noodles) and we found it very good. Customers were noisy, however, and we had a good chance to study the behaviour of some young people which were quite ruthless, to say the least. New guests arriving would stand around the occupied tables making the people sitting there and eating feel pressed and awkward, not being able to enjoy their food anymore. Back in the hotel we had another coffee, prepared our luggage and I put on my new boots. We were going north now in a country which was mountainous and cold. We took the bus to the station and boarded the train. We had a seat in the 10th car but since it would be a long trip we had to get a sleeper. After some time that we waited between two cars a friendly conductor appeared and gave us two berths in the last car. People here were quite the opposite of the crooks on the Shanghai train and we saw a lot of smiles and answered many questions on our whereabouts. I must tell the reader that we had changed our mind and Yennie had yielded to my proposal of going to Mount Emei, which is on the way to Chengdu, about 165 km south of it. The distance between Kunming and Chengdu is about 1100 km. For our sleepers we had to pay another 23 yuan for two people. We were tired and slept early that day, after doing some writing and reading in our guidebook.

27th December 1981

We talked on the train to various people, some of whom were complaining about the rising costs of living. They were explaining their financial situation, which roughly is as follows: the wages being around 40 yuan a month they would spend one tenth for the rent, sometimes as low as one fifteenth. Half of the wages would go for food, the other half for clothes and sweets for the children. With two family members working they could manage to do a little saving for the second child or the first bicycle, sawing machines or basic things like that. The army paid quite well and

its members were enjoying every kind of privilege, like in other countries too.

Sichuan is surrounded by mountains and very hard to travel to. (Li Bai in the eighth century was already complaining about the tough conditions for the travellers—see Tang Shi San Bai Shou¹⁰) Only recently are things happening here, connections being made and new roads surveyed. The effort is enormous and I had never passed as many tunnels as on this train ride into Sichuan. Once we passed a flooded and torn-apart railway track which was the reason why our train was going so slowly. At around 4 pm we arrived at the station where we had to get off the train. It was right in the middle of nowhere, only two cars were standing there waiting for passengers. We arranged the price to be driven to the foot of Mount Emei with one of the drivers and it must have been a misunderstanding on our side that later we were charged double the price than earlier agreed on. The car took us first to the Bao Guo Si, where every visitor must register and apply for permission to see the mountain. After that formality was accomplished we took the same car and proceeded further up the road, which was gravel and sand. The air was humid and cold. We passed small waterfalls and now almost dry riverbeds with huge boulders of stone blocking the way of the waters, which at times must be very violent and some sight to see. Many things here reminded me of Afghanistan: the riverbeds with those heavy rocks hindering the stormy waters, the winding paths branching off from the main road now leading us to the Wan Nian Si Che Chang, the parking place below the Wan Nian Si; the faces maybe most of all, stern and strong features, straight noses and curly hair. I liked the people, they were more for themselves, would not talk more than was necessary and were diligent in their ways of working and tending to the household. They were not of the Han people.

Mount Emei is or was (very difficult to determine) one of the centers of Chinese Buddhism and one of the four holy mountains in China under Buddhist influence.¹¹ Mount Tai is the fifth holy mountain in China, or the first, if you wish. The mountain was populated by monks and hermits almost exclusively, the earliest Daoist monasteries dating from the second century, which are not longer existent today. Later on during the Six Dynasties the Buddhists came to Emei Shan and made it their center for studying the sutras in southern China. Some thousands monks lived here or were coming here every year on a pilgrimage, being accommodated in one of the over a hundred temples scattered all over the mountain. Before the revolution there were still around a thousand monks living in the area, with the Bao Guo temple being their study center and the Jinding hall at the top of the mountain being the aim for every devoted pilgrim. Only around ~~ninety or a hundred~~ monks are there now; the temples were looted by the red guards and only four or five are still in use or inhabitable. One finds while climbing up to the top a number of terraces and flat grounds formerly being the space covered by the holy buildings. Only some small pavilions remain now or not even that much.

We were dropped by the car below the Ten Thousand Year Temple, as already mentioned and after the usual argument with the driver who wanted another ten yuan for just 17 km up the road from the Bao Guo Si, we left him there with four yuan in his pocket and being followed by a group of people who offered us their service as a guide we took our packs and started to walk uphill, following a winding path of mud through fields and past adobe houses. We did not really know the way but we also did not want a guide so whenever I was insecure about where to go I was calling into a house along the way asking my way through. The terrain was rough, it was very foggy and cold, but Yennie was already sweating and panting behind me. She was followed by the last person of the group ^{and} originally offering their help to us which, seeing me walking ahead with quite a fast pace became dispersed after the first twenty minutes. This young man now, the last to try his luck with us, continuous=

ly pleaded to her to let him carry her pack and lead the way, arguing that we knew nothing about the place (which was quite true) and that there were many different paths leading us to the wrong places. His last stand was that if we would not follow him we would see where we would end; he must have hinted at a very undesirable place because Yennie now got mad at him and told him to leave us alone in a very convincing manner, so we were on our own for the rest of the march, which wasn't that difficult after all. There was no snow or ice on the ground, but it was still a little slippery at the more steep parts of the path and after a climb of all in all maybe 350 meters and an hour walking we came all of a sudden to the Wan Nian Si, where we were welcomed and given a room in the temple complex itself, which was built almost entirely out of wood and did not show many signs of decay. Yet it was old and creaking in the staircases. We had no heating in our room, which made it a little unpleasant since outside the temperature was going down to two or three degrees above freezing point and the wooden doors and thin windows did not keep out the moisture and the cold dampness. We were doing all right, however, with our two sleeping bags and the blankets given to us by the staff. The Wan Nian Si is 1120 m above sea level, so we had to climb another 2060 m to reach the top of the mountain, which I thought could be done in one day. After we had arranged ourselves in the room which I will describe in a moment because it had some interesting furniture in it we were told that our diner was ready and we should come to eat. We entered a newer building which nevertheless was also not heated and open on one side; it was the restaurant together with the kitchen and the quarters for the staff to live in. The staff were mostly young people in their usual outfit of blue or green cotton, now being heavily wadded, so everybody looked a little clumsy in their movements. Our diner had been arranged in a separate room with a small table and two chairs. The meal consisted of Pao Cai, which means pickled vegetables and is famous in Sichuan, Tu Ji, a kind of chicken with black skin and white feathers, which is especially good to eat during the winter, a kind of falafil with sauce and vegetables, a big portion of pork cooked in a spicy broth, cabbage with sweet soy sauce and sugar on top. In the end came a huge bowl of soup with spinach and some sort of a sausage the like I had never seen before in China. It all tasted delicious, really a very good meal and together with the rice one can imagine how filled up we were afterwards. I remember this meal with tears in my eyes. The price for all this was about a dollar a person, hard to imagine, isn't it? We took the remaining peanuts (yes, they were there, too) and retreated to our room where we had a cup of tea from the thermophor which is given to every guest and room. The furniture in it was also much to my liking, particularly the chairs which were carved out of a wood resembling rosewood, a bit reddish in colour, if you get my meaning, and solid with armrests not too high and not too low. The beds, there were two of the marvellous, were huge and wide and had a frame above as a ceiling with four posts at its corners to hold the carved frame, which had a specific Chinese pattern, as almost everything in the room. There is a drawing of it attached to the end of the diary (I hope) which depicts the pattern of the frame, which in itself was covered by a wide cloth hanging over the sides of the bed and allowed us to be closed out completely from the outer world. The bed was about 2m long and 1.50m wide, which gave us plenty of space. A small table holding the washing basin stood beside the door to the veranda, and every morning warm water was brought to us by one of the girls. After doing the obligatory writing and the preparing for the next day we went to bed (Zhang), hoping that the weather would allow us to go to the top of the mountain. It turned out to be otherwise, with rain and fog the next day, which made us stay where we were and explore the temple.

28 th December 1981

This day we did not do very much. Something has to be said about the temple, though. It was built during the Jin dynasty (265-420) and changed its name frequently under the various dynasties. Fire damaged its buildings a number of times, but the original building still is to be seen since it was made out of stone. It clearly shows the influence of Lamaism in the region, which after all is not too far from Tibet (Xi Zang). In its main building it houses an amazing statue made entirely out of bronze. It represents the smiling Buddha riding on an elephant who is not trotting the paths of the living like any other animal on earth but his feet stand in basins of floating lily-flowers and so the whole scene is like that of a drifting elephant with a supernatural rider on his back, very impressive. The statues are made out of one cast and weigh together 62 tons, being the lifesize counterfeit of the real thing. During the cultural revolution the statue was dragged out of its building and brought downhill to some place but then abandoned. Nobody knew what to make out of 62 tons of bronze and facilities to melt the whole thing fortunately were not at hand. It has been shifted back to its original place in the hall, being surrounded by initially 500 small Buddha statues on the walls in their own little niches, now only 305 remain.

The site also has a big garden and on a small place below the temple itself stands a stone tablet with a famous calligrapher's inscription saying: Di Yi Shan. This stele dates from the Song and was carved by Mi Fei from Sang Yang. It means that it is the first mountain of significance to the person in whose pay the calligrapher did his work. Other people do not quite agree with this viewpoint and express the opinion that Tai Shan should be called the first mountain, as already mentioned.

During most of the day we stayed inside and I was working on some story about ghosts and visits to the netherworld, in Chinese.

In the afternoon the weather became a little better but we still had clouds hanging over the hills and slopes around us. We met some people from a Tibetan tribe, veritable pilgrims to the mountain, who threw off their cloaks and hides outside the temple and went in to pray to their lord. There were only four of them, but later on we saw about twenty more coming down the hill. They did not look like Chinese at all to me (in fact they are of the Indo-German race) and one of them reminded me strongly of a friend of mine at home in Germany. All their clothes were self-made including the shoes, which were made out of some sort of soft leather, reaching almost up to the knee. Their clothes were red and they had long knives in silver sheaths hanging from the belt. Some of them showed their gold teeth when they laughed. They would not stop for the night, but went on up the path, maybe they reached the Xi Xiang Chi in time to stay there. They were going fast, being used to the rough walking up and down the hills. Not all of the Tibetan race do live in Tibet itself but a few communities are to be found in Sichuan or Qinghai, even as far as Gansu in the north. We heard from some American travellers who came to Wan Nian Si in the evening that it is extremely difficult to get a permission to visit Tibet, and then only with a tour and a certain rate for a day to exchange, the amount of which one will find hard to spend in a whole week. There are flights to Lhasa from Chengdu which cost over 300 yuan one way, but mysteriously there is also a bus or truck going there, which takes between nine and eleven days. There is also a new railway line under construction linking Xining in Qinghai with Lhasa. When we were there the line was completed and in service up to Golmud.

We decided to go on up the mountain the next day, accompanied by Larry and Chris. The evening was cold again with some drizzle and we retired early to our room.

29th December 1981

This morning I woke up and found that there was something wrong with my stomach, and I decided not to eat anything today while going up the mountain. We left our belongings in the monastery and only took our sleeping bags and the canteen with Gui Hua tea with us. We had heard a monk praying early this morning; the whole ceremony of greeting the Buddha and the morning prayer had lasted for 35 minutes, the monk using little bells and touching the drums lightly once in a while. The smell of burning incense had filled the courtyard and the monk's voice could be heard in our room. At around ~~nine~~ nine o'clock we started to climb up the path, which was very slippery at times, but our shoes were good to climb with, although Yennie wore shoes which were actually too heavy for the long walk. It was an extremely laborious climb and we had to rest frequently. The air was still foggy and when we finally came into the clouds our hair became wet, small pearls of water running down from it. The path was very steep and narrow, with bamboo hanging into it from both sides. Most of the time it consisted of stairs made out of red sandstone and which were quite irregular in the way they were laid out or had been moved by the many pilgrims coming up or down this way. It took us five hours to reach the Xi Xiang Chi in the afternoon. I wanted to go on, but Yennie argued to wait for our American companions. I gave in. When they finally arrived the keeper of the temple's premises convinced us that it was too late to go on today. He was a nice young man and together with the rest of the staff working in the kitchen we had a peaceful evening, sitting around the stove in the office and talking about life and living conditions in China and Taiwan. The young people were extremely interested in Yennie and she had to answer many questions about her native country.

Once in a while a monkey was looking through the window or trying to grab something inside his reach, but he was always soon detected and shooed away. They are very curious and not in the least timid but whenever they see a pack or anything strange leaning near the entrance they have a close look at it, and then a bite, trying to steal whatever they find attractive. The government pays the keepers of the temple to feed them, which is the reason why there are so many of them around. They are not really dangerous, since they are used to being fed and seeing strangers, but in some parts of the mountain they were rather vicious, as we were told.

The Xi Xiang Chi is so called after the legend that at the time of the Jin dynasty a Buddhist monk named Bu Xian passed here on a flying elephant, which he washed here in a pool (chi) before resuming his flight. There is still a well to be seen and as I believe also still in use which was frozen at the time we were there. The place is 2200 m above sealevel and outside it was rather cold. Snow and ice had made the last parts of our climb very difficult, but for the next day we rented cramps for the shoes which made them grip much better the following section to the top. Later on three Chinese from Hongkong joined us in our group sitting around the stove. They had hired a guide for six yuan a day and also paid for his food and bed. He was a friendly man and the next evening on the top at Jinding he told us a few stories about the mountain. It took some time to get used to our bed which was damp and cold, but we had plenty of blankets to cover us so we did not freeze during the night.

30th December 1981

The morning sun shone right into our room when we woke up this morning. It had become considerably colder during the night and what yesterday had only been mud and snow was today as hard as stone and real ice. I thought it was a good idea to buy some cramps which we probably could also use in the north part of China. We fixed them to our shoes and found walking much safer now. Temperature outside was four degrees below freezing point but we were sweating and panting after only half an hour of extremely arduous climbing. We had a map of the mountain which showed us the way and told us the names of some of the former monasteries. All in all we counted thirty place names on our way up to the top, of which eleven were still to be distinguished as the site of a building, but I only counted eight places which still showed signs of activity, mostly stands for tea and light meals which during the summer months are catering to the tourists.

On our way we noticed the beautiful bamboo plants whose leaves had a fine transparent coat of ice which made it look like some very delicate piece of jewelry tingling from the thin branches. We also had some nice views today, slowly approaching the highest peak of the mountain.

We were accompanied by a young boy today who had left his home and was on some kind of an odyssey through the country. He had no money and we were suspicious of him for a while, refusing his offer to carry some of our packs, which were not heavy at all since they only contained the sleeping bags and the clothes we had found more comfortable to walk without them. The boy was dressed in a grey outfit, pants and a jacket, but was hobbling along the slippery path only wearing canvas tennis shoes with no strings holding them. Furthermore he wore no socks, which must have been rather cold. We had not brought a spare pair with us otherwise we would have given him some to wear. But we had seen a number of people coming down from the top not wearing any shoes at all, just socks, very thin nylon material, and underneath those straw sandals which prevented them from slipping on the ice and which also were sold further down at the Wan Nian Si or the Bao Guo Si.

The landscape became more and more splendid and awesome the further we went on our way. At two o'clock in the afternoon we reached the Golden Summit. From here we had a truly beautiful view over the sea of clouds drifting below us. We all wanted to get up early the next morning to see the sunrise. There used to stand a glistening bronze hall on top of Mt. Emei, but now only its ruins remain and a single bronze bell standing forlorn in a field just below its former proper place. It was very cold up here and the temperature dropped to 14 degrees below in the evening. We all gathered in the warmest room of the weather station and waited for the sunset. Not only a weather station is now up there but also a radio and tv transmitter with high antennas. A number of ~~low~~ barracks make the place now very ugly, were once only the temple itself stood. There are in the summer months sometimes up to one thousand people at the same time looking for a bed, and the authorities had built a number of barracks to provide shelter for them. However, now in the winter we were only ten people and we had the whole building to our self, which is situated a hundred yards away from the ruins of the Golden Hall and also rather old. The food up here is far more expensive than at the foot of the mountain since everything has to be brought up by porters which can carry over one hundred pounds on their backs and which we had frequently seen on the way. They use packs with wooden frames and heavy walking sticks to secure their steps. All the material for the new stations was carried up on their backs or pulled up with ropes. The effort must have been immense. We were told, however,

that a cabin lift was planned and when we would come back in two years we could be transported conveniently to the top of the mountain, thus saving time and money for the overnight stay, which had to be payed for when going by foot. In my opinion this sort of a lift would not only destroy some of the fine scenery but also the whole attitude and feeling one has while climbing a holy mountain, and the Tibetan pilgrims we saw on our way will no doubt detest this sort of a vehicle sweeping over their heads while they do their prayers. Everyone of them by the way leaves a token behind on a special frame facing exactly to the direction where the sun rises, being just a few paces away from the Golden Hall. These tokens are a string of hair, small colourful stones or shells, wrapped in paper with a few characters written on it, more often than not written in Chinese.

We were all up quite late this evening, drinking tea and talking. The guide hired by the Chinese from Hongkong was telling a story about an old woman who was believed to be consumed by a tiger roaming the mountain. It was interesting to note that her death was indirectly hinting at the fact that she in the end had attained enlightenment and was welcomed by the Boddhisattva, because she was said to be a devotee of the Buddha and that she had come to the mountain every year. Her body was never found and that was the reason why people believe she was taken by the tiger to the paths of the holy. This story originated in the 40s. The guide also told a story about a person who had lost his face when he was attacked by a bear, having received a violent blow from the claws, tearing his face from the bones. The man, he was in his thirties, survived, but from then on all the children would flee him and his friends were no longer his friends. He had to leave the area and nobody knows what had become of him since.

We asked the guide about his personal development and he told us that he had a family and children. He was once trained and working as a sort of agricultural biologist developing new plants for domestication and adopting methods of how to increase the earning capacity of certain grain plants. This was in the neighborhood province, however, and he could only see his wife and family once or twice a year. He therefore had applied for transfer to his native province to be with his wife and child. There were no jobs in the field he had been trained in Sichuan available for him so he became a labourer and a guide, raising pigs at home for an extra income. I do not think the man was too happy with his present occupation because he made a rather depressed impression on me when the next day the Hongkong Chinese split up from the northern route and persued the southern way, with him carrying their cameras and clothes, he gave me a sad look while we parted, which almost made me say: "Fang xin, fang xin!" Take it easy, take it easy. I did hold back with it, still, I did not want to embarrass him.

Our bed that night was close to being frozen and we had a hard time to fall asleep, but eventually managed to do so and awoke early the next day, refreshed and ready for the descent.

31, December 1981

The sun was out and above the clouds at around eight o'clock, but it was not that much of a spectacle as we had wished for. The clouds had dispersed a little during the night and that was the reason why we had only an unclear picture of the sunrise. We were all standing there on top the cliff which on this far side of the mountain drops at least five hundred meters in a straight line and has been a temptation to many a monk who thought he had attained enlightenment, and thought by jumping from the cliff would become one with his lord.

The boy was also with us, standing somewhat away from us. Yennie had given him some money the night before to enable him to eat and have a bed, which he had accepted.

A few things have to be added here which I think are of some importance. The first point is that most of the people working in the temples and adjoining guesthouses are rather young, between 16 and 30 years of age. The staff maintaining the weatherstation are here for three years and they have the choice after that to stay or to be transferred to some other place. I don't think one of them was married.

The second point to add is the fact that the radio transmitter made it possible for them to listen to news and stations from Taiwan, a very surprising fact since the island is 1200 miles away by air. But the government was even farther away and nobody was arguing against hearing some modern music or listening to the old opera plays which were abandoned for so long in the land. News were of the greatest interest for the young men and women because they would express quite another point of view on certain topics than the broadcasting in Peking or Chengdu.

The third subject is that maybe eighty percent of the staff working here are not from the area or even the province. They come from far away and have not been home for a couple of years. They have arranged themselves with the circumstances and try to make the best out of it. They lead a way of life not being interfered with by any cadre or brigade-leader and are much for themselves, which leaves them a great amount of freedom in their actions. The work has to be done, of course, but now in the wintertime there was not much to do. That was the reason why they invited us to stay and spent the evening with them, which came as an offer quite natural to us.

The mountain had only opened its paths to foreigners in 1978 and it is usually not on the list of the tours through China being sold in the travel agencies.

Behind the guesthouse near the top of the cliff is a wide field where mushrooms are cultivated which are famous throughout the country.

The descent was fun. We took the cramps from our shoes and were sliding down all the way we had so much laboured to come up. We did not really slide the whole way but the first few kilometers were thick with ice and snow covering the path, which made it one long chute almost down to the Xi Xiang Chi. Yennie was far behind and for a long time I did not see her until finally I was told that she had taken another way. I was alarmed and together with the guide pursued the small group that was going astray. It took some time to overtake them and then we had to climb back up to the point from where they had chosen the wrong way. We finally made it down to the Wan Nian Si but we had missed the bus. The boy was way ahead with Larry and Chris, who had not waited for us but had gone straight down to the parking lot and from there to the Bao Guo Si where they had left their luggage. We picked up our stuff and asked a group of army members if they would take us along with them in their bus down to Emei Xian, from where we hoped to get the train to Chengdu. They agreed and on the way we spotted Larry and Chris together with the boy. We asked the driver to pick them up too since they were our friends but I felt a little awkward for our Chinese companion who no doubt would be discovered as a person who had left his home without permission and had gone to places he was not allowed to see, officially. He had no money, which meant that he was riding on the trains for free, like a vagabond trying to cheat the conductor. This was actually the truth. Anyhow, when they were picked up by the car there was no way out for him, he had to go along with it and face the consequences. What happened next was that he was addressed by a friendly soldier's voice asking him about his trip and how it had been up up on the top and where he would go next. The man perfectly understood the

situation the boy was in but made no move to reproach him for having run away from home or riding the trains without paying. Instead he asked if he wanted to go and see the Buddha of Jia Ding, a colossal statue cut out of the rock face above the River Min to the south of Mount Emei. The boy was shy in answering the man's questions, but he told the truth, nevertheless. When we were dropped off to the end of our lift with the army people I again gave him some money, and he thanked in a courteous manner. (I should have given him more I thought later) With the amount he had now he would be able to buy himself some food but a ride on the train was still not affordable to him.

This evening was New Years Eve, so we western people (there were four of us) decided to spend the time together, having some food and drink. The main street of Emei Cheng was rather crowded with many stands selling all sorts of goods and we bought a lot of beer and Larry produced some strong liquor out of his bag which we took along with us looking for a place to eat. We had been dropped in front of the only hotel in town and taken two rooms in the fairly new building. It was inexpensive and good for the night. We had walked down from this hotel and after some time passed a place where Jiao Zi were sold (a sort of meat filled makkaroni - in fact I believe that this Italian dish was brought to Italy from China by Marco Polo). While entering we immediately attracted a large crowd, filling the door and the window with faces young and old. We had a good meal and plenty of drink. After having satisfied our hunger and thirst there still was our curiosity about the place itself and we sat down in a very country-style teahouse with bamboo chairs and low tables under a thin wooden roof. Here we saw some very interesting characters sitting and drinking tea or playing cards. Some of their coats had fur linings and thick collars of fox-skin. Not half of them were of the Han race but rather had some Turkish or inner-Asian features. It was here that I experienced a certain kind of attachment to the men (there were no women), a feeling of silent belonging, of being not so different from them after all and I had the great wish to be able to stay with some of these ~~men~~ men and go out and hunt or make jokes or just be quiet as they usually were, having dark penetrating eyes and skin like leather. The Old Shatterhand syndrome I called it later, anticipating that it could be possible and that I had the guts to do the things they were doing. Yennie was sitting beside me but she was so far removed from me I could have never get across with the expression of this feeling without spoiling it completely. She was not in it at all and there was no way to explain. Then. It is different now and she may read and think about it. It is a man's dream.

It was well after midnight that we returned back to the hotel and went to sleep. The train was due the next day at around noon taking us to Chengdu and Larry and Chris (which is short for Christine) south to Kunming.

1st January 1982

The train ~~going~~ going south was leaving at around ten o'clock and we accompanied our friends to the railway station after eating breakfast together on the main street. It was some sort of sweet soy bean milk, a kind of breakfast very common on Taiwan but here in the People's Republic it was hard to come by and we saw it very seldom.

We had seen the boy again today and he had slept maybe in a shed because his clothes showed some signs of hay on them.

After the farewell to Larry and Chris we returned to our hotel and prepared the luggage and a pot of tea for the three-hour train ride to Chengdu. Once at the railway station we bought the tickets and boarded the train, finding ourselves again in the company of our little Chinese friend (he was around 15 or 16), who had managed to slip through the controls and get on the train. He was on his way home he explained to us, therefore he had to go to Chengdu to get the right train.

We said goodbye to him at the railway station when we arrived there and never saw him again. Good luck to him.

We took the bus no. 16 from the station to the hotel, where we were asked if we were married. We said of course and there were no further questions to that matter. We got a good and heated room to a very low price. The hotel there is called the Jin Jiang hotel and is close to the Nan River, being a tall building overlooking the red tiled roofs of the Chinese houses. After getting settled in our room we felt the labour and exhaustion of our climb up Mt. Emei, but not so much the climbing actually as more the coming down, which gave us great pain in the legs for the next three days. It had been worth it, however, I would not regret one minute of our stay there. Consequently now, while walking in the street it felt like walking on raw eggs, as we say in Germany. It was very awkward and the nearest distance to, say, a restaurant, was a thing to consider and ponder over to see if we could make it and look decent at the same time. We did go out indeed that night, relying on our guide which gave us the location of the famous Fu Rong restaurant and since we had heard so much about the Sichuan cuisine we were eager to try it here in the country itself. Strange enough, it was at this restaurant that we had the worst meal of our whole tour through China and the worst service in addition to the fact that the dishes were extremely fat and that there was no timing to them, which means that the rice came at the very end when everything had been tried and eaten half and then put aside. There always is a truly uneatable meal on a trip like this and that was the one this evening.

2nd January 1982

We had to go to the police today to get a permission for Chengdu. We had changed plans earlier and decided not to go to Chongqing, which is further east on the Long river (Chang Jiang). Furthermore our visa was expiring in a week and we wanted to stay longer, having just started our voyage. We were met by a friendly young woman who was very helpful and within half an hour we received our passports with the extension for another month, which would give us plenty of time to see the places that we were still interested in. Yennie, who did not feel very well today, returned to our room for a rest while I was walking through the streets to look for a Chinese town but only found a big village. Its history will be the next section.

Cheng Du, the provincial capital of Sichuan, which used to be considered one of the most beautiful towns in China, and which is not unlike Peking (in trying to become a real city - Anmerkung des Verfassers), has been changing rapidly since 1949 (which means that its original beauty has been destroyed to a large extent - A.d. Verfassers).

It is an ancient city, whose history goes back over more than two thousand years. It was already in existence at the time of the Spring and Autumn Annals (compiled by Confucius) around 770-475 bc. With Liu Bei it was the capital of the kingdom of Shu during the Three Kingdom era (221-263) and again the Five Dynasty period. It was the headquarters of numerous rebellions and was almost destroyed by the Mongols under the reign of Kublai Khan. Marco Polo has visited the town and given a description of it. There was not much development for a long time but it was always the trading center and cultural nucleus of the south-west, and it still is today. The communists and the Guo Min Dang took refuge here from the oncoming Japanese, who found Sichuan to be a natural fortress with the mountains surrounding it. The famous poet Du Fu had lived in Chengdu and composed over two hundred poems here during his three years spending away from his real home.

There is a lot to say about Sichuan and its major towns. It has always played a large role in the history, is one of the most fertile areas in the republic, consequently one of the most densely populated and richest provinces. It is almost a world for itself, being hard to reach in the old days and having a climate in the extreme between monthlong rains and fog and snowfall, alternating with dry seasons and scorching heat.

Now just after New Year it was cold and humid, but we had no snowfall which might have given the town a more friendly face. Like that, cold and the trees stripped off their green coats, with apartment blocks lining the broad grey streets, it was very unpleasant for the eye and nothing to write about. Before Yennie went back to the hotel, however, we had visited a Buddhist temple called the Wen Shu Yuan. This temple had been closed for renovation for a long time but since 1980 again been opened to the public. It was or still is (if only formally) the Quarters of the Buddhist congregation in south-western China and there is a tablet indicating the long spiritual tradition of the temple. This Buddhist society seems to be gaining activity and support again since we found it in many other places reestablished and holding its former locations, many of which have only recently been renovated after the damages inflicted by the Red Guards. The Wen Shu Yuan was a very frequented place for young and old—the former walking about smoking cigarettes and making pictures and the latter burning incense and praying to the golden Buddha statues in the temple hall. Nothing else shows the great discrepancy between the older and the younger generations, the younger one having no spiritual education at all exhibiting a tragic shallowness depriving them completely of other qualities than being merely functional. There was an old teahouse in the side building where many people gathered for recreation and contemplation and a small store selling souvenirs. Very interesting to see was an exhibition displaying picture scrolls of more modern origins and silver carvings, marvellous pieces of craftsmanship. I especially remember a Bonsai tree made entirely out of silver, with delicate branches and needles. In the afternoon I went alone through the city, as already mentioned, and I found a or maybe the bookstore with a good collection of Penguin-books and the Times and the Newsweek for sale. Looking for the bookstores later on became a habit for me and the first place to visit in town. If there was an antique bookshop it took me a long time without feeling the cold inside the store to give them a good look-over and Yennie had to remind me a few times that there were other things to do and to see outside my world of books. I started buying only in Peking on the way back.

On the streets I noticed bicycle rickshaws and not all of them were driven by old men but quite a few had a younger driver peddling along.

I took the bus home down Ren Min Nan Lu, which has at its northern end the tall statue of Mao standing in front of the Sichuan Exhibition Hall and pointing south with a stretched arm, in grey concrete. Those signs of sympathy with the great helmsman are to be seen all over China, but they become withered now and some times we had seen blank spots on a wall or a bridge where formerly a red star used to be or the inscription of some slogan used by the party to define its enemies.

We did make plans to leave the city the next day and after having eaten some of our own food went to bed early this evening. We had tried upon our arrival to purchase the ticket for Xian (Chang An) but had been told to come back the next day, which would be our first thing to do tomorrow. We also wanted to have a look at the Panda bears in the local zoo and the museum of the province.

3rd January 1982

Chengdu's railroad station lies in the north part of town, the distance from the hotel is considerable. We took the bus to get there and had to change once. The tickets for Xian were available now, but as happened before, no sleepers. We would have to depend on the train staff again in this matter. After the purchase Yennie and I went to the zoo outside the city itself, where we saw our first Panda bears ever. We made some pictures but were unable to get a good shot of their faces because they seem to have the ignorant habit of covering their eyes with the paws to keep the daylight out. They looked funny indeed and were lying there in the small grounds attributed to them in all positions and fashions not caring about a soul. After the visit to the zoo we were tired and our legs were still sore, so we took the bus back to the hotel and checked out. We left our belongings in the care of the service staff and I left again to cross the Nan River and stroll around the streets. After some time I reached the Wu Hou Si, a large temple complex dedicated to the memory of the great scholar and strategist Zhu Ge Liang (181-234), who was a renowned strategist and statesman and is one of the main characters of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. The shrine was built during the Tang Dynasty and reconstructed during the early Qing Dynasty. It comprises a beautiful garden and graceful wooden buildings with elaborate carvings around the doors and windows. Here I found a quiet spot to rest and watch an old man performing the art of Tai Ji Quan, who definitely had chosen a lovely place for exercising. There is still something to say about the places we did not visit. First of all the cottage of Du Fu, the famous Tang poet, in whose memory the town has built a shrine surrounded by the Cao Tang park. Another fact useful to know is that Sichuan had always been a good place to go and get oneself healed from a disease in the traditional style with herbs and plants which are abundant in the area. This resulted in the creation of the famous Chengdu College of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Another college is the one exclusively for minorities in the region, the Southwest China College for Nationalities. There are also some very interesting shops in town, at least they were so for me. Since Sichuan is very mountainous, people can only cultivate a certain part of it (which is still far above average for the whole of China), and in the mountains still live a large number of larger animals including snow leopard, tiger, wolf and fox, and naturally the game they live of, namely deer, wild sheep and goat, some kind of beaver and other animals. The furs of these animals can be seen and bought for a cheap price in a number of stores in town, together with other products made out of leather. The price for a jacket with sheepskin at the inside was 29 yuan, which is very cheap. A wolf's fur came close to 80 or one hundred yuan, and a blanket made out of leopard skin was around 500 yuan, still a good price for a hide; the quality of the furs or more precisely the tanning of the furs was low, which means that the furs for the most part were still very stiff and maybe uncomfortable to wear the first months. The shop-owners themselves were 95% not Han-Chinese and I consider them to be rather wealthy, because they were not only selling furs but also watches, which affords a certain amount of capital and financial background. They were definitely the people in town selling the most expensive goods and I don't believe that it was all controlled by the government. The textile and leather factories outside town may be under government supervision, but those shops and stores made the impression as if they were privately owned. Back in the hotel we prepared our packs for the train which was bound to leave for Xian at around midnight. We had a talk with another German just coming from there and he said that we would have to put up with great cold and snow on the streets. He, by the way, had been to the restaurant we had eaten the night before and he said to have been served an excellent meal. I told him about our adventure and he was just shaking his head, finding it hard to believe. This evening

we had given it another try in the Chengdu restaurant on Sheng Li Zhong Lu, but again we could not say that we were satisfied with the way the young people would serve us nor with the meals that we had ordered. The service was really unfriendly and reluctantly performed as if they did not want to do it at all, flunking the dishes on the table, not caring at all whether the soup would spill over the brim or not. We found them very rude in the way they did perform their work and it was a relief to enter a restaurant and find it managed by a staff of older people who still knew how to behave and hold themselves in check. This type of service resembles the old days and healthy relationships between a guest and a waiter, who should not let any personal feelings interfere with his job, and a good example is still to be found in some restaurants in Shanghai where old waiters trained to serve a western world are still working with manners and engagement the way I have never seen in any part of the world (Vienna maybe excluded since the Austrians have unique traditions what etiquette concerns). I am not ~~intending~~ to defend the old society, but the same phenomena appeared to me when I visited the eastern part of my own country and had found the waiters and servicemen in the restaurants and hotels at times very unfriendly and unwilling to do anything which meant that they had to work for another person, whose mere existence was some sort of reproach or intimidation to their own.

4th January 1982

On the train to Xian, which is 842 km away from Chengdu, we could not secure a sleeper for us because the train was full and there were none left. Or maybe there weren't even sleepers for a trainride covering such a short distance, I don't quite remember how it came that we had to find a hard seat all the way. I managed to locate a compartment at the very head of the train and we could stretch out during the night. The people were friendly to us and when Yennie once in the afternoon went to see the conductor to inquire about food we later were served right at our seat with eggs and meat and vegetables, all in all as good a meal as one can expect on a trainride. This was the only time that anything like this happened to us and never again did we have the meals brought to us to our seats. It was quite a surprise. There was a young woman sitting nearby with a boy of about four years of age. They both made a great impression on me. There is a lot of talking about the liberation of the woman here in China and many things have changed for them in the last forty years. The character of this young mother - she was around my age - struck me as being very stable and settled, she was strong in her way of expressing herself while talking to other persons sitting opposite to her and her attitude towards the boy was a mixture of austerity and loving care, exercised with a great amount of confidence and insight in the boy's character and the nature of his needs; the woman and the boy were travelling by themselves and in the way they were addressed and spoken to by other persons, most of them were single men travelling without their wives I believe, there was clearly a form of respect and admiration for her manner of talking and looking after her child showing in their speech.

This time the trainride was a long one. There had been a flooding of a bridge and our train was seven and a half hours late when it finally arrived in Xian. The countryside we had been passing the day was dry and scanty, with ravines and steep slopes. We passed a whole series of tunnels again, leaving Sichuan to the northern route and entering the province of Sha(a)nxī, where it all started. The country here is mostly flat and rather dry, with cold winds coming from the inner-asian steppes. This wind was greeting us when we finally got off the train at Xian at shortly after one o'clock on the morning of the

5th January 1982

Of all the cities on our China itinerary, Xian shows the longest continuity of settlement. Xian served as the capital of 11 dynasties and once was the world's largest town in its own day during the Tang Dynasty. It was an active link in the major trade routes between China and the commercial enclaves of Central-Asia and Europe during the seventh and eighth centuries¹². Today, Xian is the capital of Sha(a)nxi province and a model example of the PRC's government's concerted efforts to create new inland centers of industry to counterbalance the traditional dominance of the large east coast cities.

To the north of this city of 2.5 million people lie the rugged Western Hills, dotted with ancient tombs, and the Wei River, which forms a natural boundary. The entire region south of the river is fertile, suitable for growing cotton and coarse grains. The city's ancient walls and wide avenues, laid out in an orderly grid pattern (they were measured by the court astronomers), are impressive, but the modern urban housing developments are undistinguished (to say the least).

Remains of several neolithic settlements have been found near the village of Ban Po, six miles east of the town. Excavations have revealed that the site belongs to the so-called Yang Shao culture, about 6000 bc. The Zhou Dynasty, who at first ruled over western Sha(a)nxi (the Jing valley), were constantly harried by the "Western barbarians", and several times moved their capital further east. In 1122 bc., when the Zhou king Wen annihilated the Yin Dynasty, he made Hao his capital (east of the Feng Shui). It remained the Zhou capital until 770 bc., when they finally established their capital at Luoyang.

The principality of Qin, a vassal of the Zhou, was granted a fief north of the upper part of the river Wei, and grew up among the "barbarians". In the reign of Xiao Gong they moved their capital to Xian Yang, on the left bank of the Wei. That is twelve miles east of modern Xian Yang, and the date given is 361-338. Qin Shi Huang Di enlarged the town considerably after the unification of the empire. A huge palace (the A Fang) was built on the grounds of present day Xian, but never completed and later destroyed by Liu bang, the first emperor of the Han, then assuming the name Gao Zu (206). The name of the capital was renamed and called Chang An. The town remained fairly small until emperor Hui Di (194-187) decided to enlarge it and to build a wall around the palaces. The wall followed the arrangement of the buildings, and the resulting irregular shape is unusual; it was twelve miles round and had twelve gates. In 129 bc. a canal was constructed linking the city with the river Feng and the area round the upper reaches of the Wei to the west, and to the river Chan and the lower reaches of the Wei in the east (the canal was used until Tang times). The town became less important under the Eastern Han and the Northern Dynasties and faded into the background.

The Sui emperor Wen Di founded his new capital, Da Xing Cheng (town of great prosperity) southeast of the old Chang An of the Han, in 582. The architect Yu Wen Kai (555-612) was put in charge of the work. When the Tang came to power, they took over their predecessors' capital, gave it its old name of Chang An, and enlarged it. The town then had over a million inhabitants and formed a vast rectangle, six miles long and 5 1/2 miles wide; an earth fortification was built around it, with eight gates to the north and three on each of the other sides. The city was divided into three parts: the palace, the imperial town, and the outer town. The tombs of the Tang emperors are north of the Wei, except for the last two, which are buried in Henan. The town had already suffered during the An Lu Shan rising¹⁵, and was largely destroyed when the Tang dynasty fell (907/8). The town went into a long decline, from which it emerged at the beginning of the Ming dynasty. In 1370, Emperor Hong Wu gave Chang An in fee to his son Zhu Shuang; the town was then ordered to be rebuilt by Ren Chi Wan, which then occupied only one sixth of the dimensions it had under the Tang.

It was at that time called Qin Wang Fu and an imperial palace^{wa} built to house the king and his kinsfolk. This Ming palace was abandoned under the Qing, and an area between the north and the east walls and the famous belltower was taken over by the Mandchu as their district (it was enclosed by walls which were knocked down at the beginning of the republic). The Tartar forces were stationed here, with one of their generals in command, who was responsible for defending the north of the empire.

At the end of the Qing dynasty (1910-11), the town experienced several upheavals: Moslem risings, and worst of all, the massacre of the Mandchu during the 1911 revolution. The old general threw himself down a well, and the Mandchu forces tried to surrender but were shot and killed by the raging crowds.

In 1930 a railway line was built which gave more easy access to it and so made it less isolated. In 1936, Jiang Kai Shek visited the nearby hot springs to rest from his military campaigns against the Communists and provincial warlords. In an event later known as the Xian Incident, Jiang was kidnapped by a local warlord who sought to compel him to negotiate peace with the Communists and join them in a united front against the Japanese. Zhou En Lai was dispatched to Xian to negotiate on behalf of the Communists and, despite Jiang's attempt to escape (the rat-A. d. Verfassers), a temporary agreement was effected.

The most dramatic changes have come about for Xian since 1949. The city has developed into a textile center of the northwest. Many other new industries such as fertilizer, chemicals, and electrical components have been introduced. Xian is now the site of 11 of Sha(a)nxi's 15 universities and research institutes, including Jiao Tong University, one of China's largest polytechnical institutions. The region has its own theatrical, operatic, music, and dance traditions which continue to thrive. Unfortunately we did not see any of it until we came to Shanghai.

We left the train and had a twenty minute walk to the hotel, the Ren Min Da Xia, which looks like the Senckenberg Museum, but much wider wings embrace the piazza in front of it, and the whole terrain is surrounded by a high wall. It was two hours after midnight when we knocked at the gate, which was closed. Some sleepy fellow opened and motioned us to go straight ahead across the piazza and we would reach the reception hall. Here we found a young and helpful lady who said she could not do anything for us until the hotel officially opens, which was at around 7.30. We drew some chairs together in the lobby and stretched out to sleep. At the time mentioned we were awakened by an argument between our lady and the main receptionist who obviously did not approve of her letting us stay and sleep in the hall. We were then given a strange room in the back building, which consisted actually of two rooms, one of them more comfortable and better furnished than the other, which made us guess that it was originally designed to house a cadre or higher official in the good room and his two servants or secretaries in the other one, now inhabited by ourselves. I used to go to the other room and sit down to do my writing in the evening. A large wardrobe and the bathroom was ours for the next few days and after having inspected the place we fell into our beds again and slept until 11 am. (There is also another hotel of a bad reputation open to foreigners, conveniently situated just opposite the railway station in the north of the city). We left the hotel at around noon without having the keys for our room, which could not be locked, because there was no lock for a key, and which made Yennie feel uneasy. When we left the gate we turned right and then left again which was the road to take into the center of town. The pattern of the streets is very easy to follow, since there are only right angles, so one cannot go wrong. There was no snow in them, but a chilly wind from the northwest was blowing. The streets were full of people and despite the season there were many stands on the sidewalk selling Chinese and Mongolian food, or Moslem restaurants from which a wholesome smell of grilled mutton was coming. We noticed a number of shops selling rather expensive Japanese goods such as recorders and tv-sets.

When we finally reached the museum it was already after four o'clock and there was only an hour left to have a short look. We visited the special exhibition of ancient mummies, the oldest being a twenty year old girl which had died 3200 years ago and her discovery had caused a great excitement by all kinds of researchers connected to China. Her hair was still visible, twisted into a plait, long and black. The hall contained five more mummies from around 100 ad. to 1800, during the Qing Dynasty. Two of them had obviously died in great pain, since their mouths were opened wide and mournful as if to exclaim a great sorrow. Unlike the Egyptian mummies these here are completely stripped off their wrapping and bandages so that every detail of their body can be seen and analysed. At the exit of the hall we saw some roentgen pictures showing anomalies of the dead or mentioning directly the cause of their death. We did not have time for more today, but decided to come back again and examine the well-known forest of stelae. Just opposite the entrance to the museum is a small coffeehouse selling hot milk and tea and the like. We entered and sat down at one of the four tables to warm up a little bit, and soon found ourselves in a lively discussion with the owners, some young people, who, after a while, produced some food and urged us to eat. They were friendly but they also had an air of superficiality, just touching a serious topic lightly and then jumping to another one, presuming that what had been said about reunion with Taiwan for instance would please Yennie. On the other hand they were treating the relationship with other foreigners and the fact that they could invite them into their house like an everyday event, now becoming a widespread custom in China, not worth mentioning and talking about. It is by far not as normal as they wanted us to believe, and staying overnight in a Chinese friend's place is out of the question (we had some good luck and the right connections later in Shanghai and Suzhou). I had some dealings with one of the young men two days after our first visit to the museum, and I found it rather unpleasant the way he talked then. On coming back to our hotel we had some food and drink, after which we went to bed. We had plans for the next day and had to get up early.

6th January 1982

We had a long search this morning for the bus to Qin Shi Huang Di's tomb and after one hour asking and running about found it behind the railway station. The drive took about an hour and a half through a dry and dusty country, flat and with the only trees lining the street we were moving on. When we got there we saw a huge hangar-like hall which had been built to cover the over 6400 life-size terracotta figures said to represent the first emperor's personal army. Only a small portion has been excavated and restored, but there is no way to have the original design until they are painted as the originals used to be, distinguishing the corporal from the general and the footsoldier from the sergeant, everyone clearly different from the other by his armour-coat, the way his hair is styled the brooches holding the shouldercloth and the armour they used to carry such as shields and swords and lances. Everything including the fine small horses looks very much alive and alert, ready to defend its deceased king against any intruder. Taking pictures is strictly forbidden, but fortunately the respective signs standing at the edge of the pit are big enough to give protection from the guard on duty, and I was making about ten pictures which I treasured very high. However, any pictures taken after our descent from Mt. Emei did not come out since the battery in Yennie's camera had been too weak to move the shutter. We did not notice this until we came to Hongkong and wanted our films developed, where we were told that they had not been exposed at all. We lost the visual memories of the most magnificent landscapes in China and a great number of documentary material. At that time I still believed in what I was doing and thought I was doing fine, presuming

that I had successfully fooled the regulations and being able to get away with it.

It must be said that some of the statues have been excavated and cleaned with care, but that others are still buried in the mud and sand, with only their heads sticking out or sometimes only a hand formerly holding a spear, and that all this looks very much like an army drowning in the floods of a muddy river, a theme frequently encountered in Chinese history.

The tomb of the first king of the Qin has not been opened yet. It is a small mound grown over with grass and bushes some distance away from the terracotta army.

After a short break for food outside the site itself we returned to Xian, where we climbed up the Small Wild Goose Pagoda and had a good view over the smog and dust enveloped city beneath our feet. We could see the large housing projects on the broad streets, row upon row, like some great boxes placed into the heart of the city, giving it an ugly appearance, a uniformity on a scale not thought possible in the past, brought about by China's greatest problem: its overpopulation. Birth control is rigid: one child is allowed in the city, having two will cause some reprimands towards the salary and social benefits. During the cultural revolution the control became more relaxed and many parents had a second child in that time, which boosted the population in Shanghai for example to over 12 million. In the countryside generally two children are allowed, no doubt according to the utilitarian principle of raising subjects to till the fields. The word state-slaves should be put to the readers' attention here, being used by many people with some insight about the present-day situation in the country and the attitude of the government towards the masses. State-capitalism is the correct characterization for such a corpus, primarily functioning out of interest in profit and how to catch up with the other nations, trying to mend its many complexes of inferiority towards the west after having experienced the heaviest fall a nation (but China was not a nation then - not in the true sense of the word) can possibly face. China has only recently established free treaty ports to lure foreign capital into the country, supplying the newcomers with cheap labour-forces and constituting a -if not the-largest market in the world still to explore and exploit. Many things out of China's past are now overtaking the new officials in power and create situations not possible under Mao's rule or at times when the revolutionary spirit was still alive and in a naive sense thought of being perpetual. Much has turned around, arguing against its very liberation by active souls at the beginning and middle of the century. It will never be recaptured with the same verve and force.

There is not much more to say for today. We had a glimpse at the Friendship store, which was well stocked and prepared for the spring and summer tourists. We bought some food on the way home and enjoyed the quietude of our room with tea and honey after wandering around for nine hours. Xian's walls can still be seen and they are of a very impressive size, measuring at least ten meters at the base. Tomorrow we had on our mind a trip to the tomb of the first Tang Emperor Li Shi Ming (or Tang Tai Cong), who plunged the empire into one of its most creative and productive periods China has ever experienced. The man had killed his brother in order to ascend the throne, but since he had succeeded nobody would have dared to call him unfilial or even a murderer, because, as the saying goes: "He who succeeds becomes emperor, he who fails is called a bandit."

7th December 1982

This morning it was even worse than the day before with getting started with a cultural heritage as vast as the one here in Xian. We lost precious hours in the travel, office asking for a connection to reach Li Shi Min's tomb, which is situated 60 km outside the city. The information we obtained was entirely wrong and also expressed in a very harsh manner, which left us in a strange mood that time. We found out, upon our arrival at the bus station (that time the one in the south just outside the old wall) that a bus to the Tomb was only going there twice a week very early in the morning, and today was not our day to be in luck. We turned around and followed the wall to the museum which is located just inside it, formerly it must have been the court of a rich person or some public building of importance. Outside it huge old trees are standing, great gates with brass doorknobs in the traditional lion design are still firm in their hinges, and the whole area inside does not lack a certain grace. The Forest of Stelae designates a selection unique in the world of all cultured people. They are slate-tablets or standing stones inscribed with Chinese characters concerning politics, matters of rites and etiquette, philosophy and theoretical discussions of matters of state, but also various other topics thought worthy of being carved in stone. The collection was founded in 1090. It is the oldest collection of this sort and comprises 1095 pieces, usually two meters or a little less high, about 15 to 20 cm thick and one meter wide. There are some Han fragments, but the best pieces date from the Tang and include 114 steles with the text of the twelve classics (560,000 characters); they were engraved in 837 and given to the Imperial College, where they were used for teaching, eliminating the factor of faulty written copies that were distributed among the students before this stone-engraved edition was erected in the study halls. There are also several memorial steles, the most famous of which is the one recording the arrival of the Nestorian priest A Lo Pen at Chang An, and the foundation, in 781, of a Christian Chapel in the Tang capital. There is a cross on top of this stele and some passages are in Syriac. Steles dating from the Song show fine engravings of maps of China; they are the oldest in existence. Others show famous calligraphers' handwritings or drawings of bamboo and scenes of landscapes, executed with such finesse and knowledge of the material that one can but marvel at the apparent ease with which the roughest line had been carved and carefully hewn out of the rock. Rubbings of these stelae sell for a high price all over the country in Friendship Stores and Antique Shops. The museum also houses a great collection of relicts demonstrating the wide trade-routes the capital was connected with. The Bell tower, standing in the middle of the city, is the emblem of Xian. In its present state it was built in 1583, and the fact that it is in the very heart of the town gave Jiang Kai Shek the idea to equip it with cannons to control the two main streets crossing here. It now is standing amidst the increasing traffic-trucks and carts drawn by human strength, cars with curtains to hide the precious official-passenger from the glances of the curious mob and the sea of bicycles of course, slowly drifting under the leafless trees. The Large Wild Goose Pagoda, situated in the south of the city outside the walls, is made entirely out of stone. It is a Buddhist building dating from Tang times. Several times consumed by fire, its present construction is dating from 1580. The area around it was widely known as a beauty spot and numerous pavilions have been built there to enjoy the people. It is seven stories high and measures 240 feet. Each storey has openings on all sides which provides a good view over the town, wrapped in mist and dust, and the countryside to the south, where one can clearly distinguish features of distant hills and well-ordered fields. In Xian still worth seeing are the Great Mosque of the Hui minority, being founded in 742; the Daoist monastery to the east of the wall, dedicated to the eight immortals and founded under the Song, as well as numerous other temples and sites we simply not had the

time or the means to reach them all. The weather also was a factor to consider, since it is not really a pleasure to be out and on foot trying to keep moving all the time in order not to feel too uncomfortable. This surely added to our exhaustion that we felt on leaving China.

We were also eager to go to Peking and have a weeks rest if we could. But before Peking there was still Luoyang to be seen, which had also served as the capital of the empire and is to the east of Xian, about 310 km away. We had bought the ticket to Luoyang this morning and had been told that the trip takes around 7 hours by train. In Xian we also had to go to the police to get the permission to be able to go to Luoyang and Mongolia, a place we finally decided not to visit because of our concise program that we still had in the People's Republic. We took the train that night late and had a good seat in a tremendously crowded train, which was on his way from Xin Jiang to Shanghai. Never have I seen such a crowded train, and we had been lucky to obtain a hard seat. Despite the many people I managed to write some letters to friends at home, and Yennie was dozing in the corner. People knew where we were getting off the train and when we reached our destination some hours later (the crowd around us had slowly but steadily drawn closer to our seats) it was hard for us to leave our places because people were already fighting for it, pushing and rushing to get the window seat to be able to lean against.

It was early even for Chinese standards when we got off the train in Luoyang, before three o'clock.

Before making the break and advancing to the next day there still remains something to be said about some sort of people in Xian which we had not noticed in the three weeks before. Mainly upon our way to the railway station we saw some figures walking in the street in an incredible state of filth and dirt, with hay all over them and long hair. Then again in one of the restaurants opposite the station, where long queues of passengers were filed in single lines by several men wearing the uniform of the railway staff, using megaphones in their dealings with the passengers, who, upon hearing the arrival of the train, would break loose and charge against the entrance to the platforms like a frenzied crowd, opposite this strange and deeply humiliating setting could be found people whose concern was not to get home over Chinese New Year but how to get a days food. Here they were looking for it, and without anything to care about but food would wait in the restaurant (or Kneipe) for a customer to finish his meal, in order to gnaw at the leftover. We first had wanted to eat in one of these places, but once we saw how it was like inside and how many people were staring at other people eating, or wandering around in rags, we did not dare to enter, but bought some sort of chapati outside and immediately before the train left we had some shishkebab, grilled over charcoal, for one mao per spit. I had never thought it would be like this, people completely left to themselves in midst a so called socialist state, not being able to get even the bare essentials for a living. People begging in the streets are not really a common sight, though, but a few appear here and there to stretch out their skinny hands or showing off a wound which prevented them from working like the most, thus trying to raise pity in the comrades hearts, a feeling not to be found too often any more in this race of the great equalizer, may it be doctrinaire socialism or death. The old virtues, propagated by Mencius the Idealist, have always had a hard stand anywhere in the world, but today in the country of their very origin and on this day, in vain they seemed for me to have been inscribed in the black stone being assembled in the museum, never reaching the masses. It was a rather depressive lesson that we took from the Xian railway station, standing in sharp contrast to its still capturing buildings. It ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~is not~~, nothing really has changed. Still, there are some good points, some achievements which one should never leave unnoticed.

8th January 1982

The Luoyang area has undergone similar steps of cultural evolution like Xian Yang. Neolithic cultures like the Yang Shao and the Long Shan flourished here to the north of the river Luo. In 770 bc., the Zhou made Luoyang their chief capital, and it remained the king's residence until 205bc. Tradition has it that that the philosopher Su Qin was born here, that Lao Zi lived here and studied in the archives, and that Confucius came here to learn about music.

Under the Qin Luoyang was given to Shi Huang Di's father as a fief. Under the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220) Luoyang once again became the chief capital, and was greatly expanded. The great Imperial College was here, to which over 30,000 students came from all over the country (more than in any university in present China are to be found registered). The library was a large one; when the Han fled from Luoyang, reportedly 7000 chariots were needed to move it. Ban Gu, the historian and author of the "History of the Han", lived here during this period, Chang Heng, the astronomer, who built the hydraulic armillary sphere, the eunuch Cai Lun, who is traditionally said to have invented paper, and many more highly educated and inventive people. Buddhism was also introduced around 68 ad.

The Wei and the Jin used Luoyang as their capital. The poet Xi Kang and his friends (the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove) lived here. So did the historian Chen Shou, who signed his name under the "History of the Three Kingdoms. The northern Wei also made Luoyang their capital (494-534). At that time there were 1,367 Buddhist temples in town. Work was begun at the Long Men caves. When the Wei fell from power, the town which they had built was completely destroyed, and the following Sui emperor Yang Di chose a new site for his residence. A new town was built not far from where the old one had stood, and Yu Wen Kai, the engineer of the Grand Canal, was commissioned to lay the foundations of the new city, on the plain where the existing old town still is. By then it was inhabited by close to a million people. Two great canals linked Luoyang to the rest of the empire: the northern canal led to the area surrounding present-day Peking; the southern canal led to Hangzhou. Only six emperors of the Tang lived in Luoyang, which alternated now with Xian. Empress Wu Ze Tian (684-705) was happiest here and called it Shen Du. As it grew progressively more difficult to provide Chang An with grain, the last Tang emperors settled definitely at Luoyang, which was nearer to the agricultural areas of the lower Yang Zi. Once more poets flocked to the court, China's greatest poets ever came to stay here at least contemporarily: Du Fu and Li Bai wrote here, and Bai Ju Yi came to end his life here, he lived in a little hermitage near Long Men, where his tomb can still be seen today. Zhang Yi Xing wrote his treatise on pharmaceuticals here in the old library, which contained over 50,000 books.

After the fall of the Tang, during the Five Dynasties, Luoyang was the capital of the Later Liang (907-923), the later Tang (923-936), and of the Later Jin, for eleven months. Under the Northern Song, many scholars and writers lived at Luoyang. The New History of the Tang was written here by Ou Yang Xiu. The Song had their capital at Bian Jing (Kai Feng) and Luoyang lost its rank as capital for good. When Bian Jing was taken by the forces of Jin (organized by a proto-Mandchu people known as Jurchen¹¹) and for the first time in Chinese history the political and cultural center of China moved south of the Jiang Zi (establishing the Southern Song court at Hang Zhou), it caused a drastic break in the history of Luoyang. The town was destroyed, and at times the population sank as low as 20,000 people. Then, under the Yuan, the Ming and the Qing, the town was merely the capital of its province, Henan. After 1949, however, and with the construction of the railway line, the town developed once more, but more in the economical field, since China's first tractor plant has been built here, as well as machinery works and glass works. The population now is around 750,000 people. The countryside around the town supplies wheat, corn, sorghum, sesame, peanuts and cotton. The winds are not as rough here as we were to experience as soon as we got off the train from Xian. It was gentle and warmer here.

The place in front of the station was extremely peaceful and had an atmosphere which had been altogether lacking in Xian or any other major town we had been so far. There were some drivers offering their service to us, but not with greed or eagerly pushing forward, but rather friendly and jokingly, once they had perceived that we both could speak Chinese and were no newcomers to the country or the culture. There were motordriven rikshaws and pedicabs, and we decided to go for the silent threewheeled bicycle, which brought us in a forty-minute ride through the dark city's broad tree-lined streets to our hotel, the Friendship Hotel, which only recently had been renovated and was now equipped with heating in all its rooms, as well as air condition. When we arrived there we found the door closed, just as it had happened to us in Xian; Upon our knocking we were let in and made ourselves comfortable in the hall, after some arguing with the staff, who said we would be given a room in the morning. At around seven thirty the receptionist, a soft-spoken man in his thirties, listened to our proposal of giving us a cheap heated room and satisfied our needs by giving us a room for twelve yuan the night. The hotel itself was not in the category of the prevailing Stalinist architecture or decor and it was not a big one like in Xian, which made us feel at home in a short time. The service and the information we obtained about places to go and see in town were excellent, in fact the most precise information we ever were given on trains, connections to the capital, places of interest in town and how to get there.

We left the hotel shortly after ten o'clock, walking all along the railroad track on one side and a high wall concealing a vast industrial complex on the other towards the station, which was an hour's walk. We could not get tickets for the next day to Peking at that time, which made us feel that we had wasted the morning, in a way. It was not too far from the station into town, however, and we took the bus out to the Long Men caves, one of the two famous places which are a must for the foreign visitor. The caves are located just above the river Yi, and a bridge spans the river exactly at the place where the ticket booth is. The caves stretch out along the bank for maybe one kilometer, and are easily accessible. As already mentioned, work has begun under the Wei, but the best carving was reputedly done under the Tang (particularly under Wu Ze Tian). Altogether there are 1,352 caves, 750 niches, 39 small carved pagodas, 97,306 statues and 3,608 inscriptions. All this was sacked by 19th and 20th century antiquarian-barbarians. The heads of nine-tenth of the statues have been damaged or removed; marks left by saws are clearly visible in several places. The site remains an impressive example of Buddhist art and lifestyle, and buddhist monks continued to live here until the middle of the 20th century. (How they could have allowed the looting I have no idea). The biggest cave of them all is the ground for the 56 ft. tall Buddha of the Ju Xian Si, with ears hanging almost to his shoulders. The famous Yao Fang Dong, a cave where medical prescriptions were carved for a hundred remedies (including madness) around the entrance. Some of the caves have beautiful patterns on the floor as well as on the walls and ceiling, traces of which can still be seen. They were painted and decorated with great care, showing the life of the Buddha in many facets.

The weather was fine and warm that day; some stands along the river were selling tea and boiled eggs, and we were sitting for some time in the low bamboo chairs, enjoying the rare fine weather and sipping our tea. There were not too many tourists, in fact we were the only foreigners in the whole town until the evening, when we met another American in the hotel. The afternoon passed quickly with taking pictures and climbing around the old caves, or simply strolling along the river, where some old fisherman had his traps laid out for crabs. When we returned to our hotel it was already dark. One thing must still be mentioned for that day: at the busstation back into town we saw a woman in her fifties dressed entirely in white, the traditional mourning garment of the Chinese, and a colour that I had never seen before wearing anybody. It stood in sharp contrast to the rest of the people's blue or black or green lined cotton clothes. We had some food in the hotel, talked to the american for a while and then went to bed early.

9 th January 1982

Our train would leave today at around 6pm., which meant we had time during the morning and early afternoon to visit the second place of major interest in Luoyang, the Bai Ma Si. As the legend tells us, this Buddhist's temple's name was given according to the fact that two monks from India arrived here on this spot and thought they had reached their destination, bringing with them the 42 article-Sutra, which they had copied in the country of Yue Shi. A temple was build there, which consequently was called the White Horse temple, and two white horses mark its entrance. The temple had to be rebuild several times, the present buildings date from the Ming. In 1957 monks of the Dhyana school, known in China as Chan and in the west under its Japanese name of Zen, still lived here. The tombs of the two monks having brought the Sutras are to be found in the western and eastern corner of the court. The temple is of great importance, since it was the earliest place to translate religious text from the Sanskrit, and the term "Si" derives its original meaning from this fact, being in use exclusively for centers of Buddhist studies, in contrast to the Daoist term "guan", which means something like an observatory for the study of natural forces and powers, both physical and metaphysical. A temple of this kind and of primary interest to people like me specializing in the history and evolution of Daoism is to be found not too far away from Luoyang, near Deng Feng. It is the Song Yuan Guan-its name indicating that it functioned first as a Yuan (meaning College), and indeed it was the only Daoist college ever in Chinese history for the sole purpose of educating students in Daoist beliefs, alchemy and pharmaceuticals, as well as providing the philosophical background. Proper examinations were held and the whole institution had the support and favour of the kings of the Sui and Wei.²⁰ Later it lost its status as an academy of Daoism and was transformed into a monastery under the Tang. Two evergreens in its garden date from the Han, the circumference of one of them is 45 feet. Also mentioned here should be the Shao Lin Monastery, about twelve miles northwest of Deng Feng, which was once the Chinese center for the Zen school and its very first founder introduced the teaching to China. His name was Bodhidharma, or Da Mo in Chinese, an Indian monk who gave rise to many tales and legends in Chinese literature. Unfortunately we did not go and see the last three places mentioned, because transportation problems hindered our range of movements to a large extent. If one had the chance to travel in China with one's own car the situation for the traveller would be an entirely different one. What we were able to see in these ten weeks of our journey was but a fraction of what there is-not only to see from a touristic point of view but also to experience and to participate with.

Our train to Peking was quite full, but we managed to receive a sleeper in the coach which is reserved for the train's personnel and for that reason lacks the loudspeakers, which turn the emptiest car into a noisy beerbar. The people we talked to were mainly army members now going home for Chinese New Year. The distance between Luoyang and Peking is around 900 km and the train was taking us through the night across the vast flat lands of northern China.

A word has to be said about restoration of ancient temples. The temples which were under restoration or where the renovation had been already finished were primarily Buddhist ones, which is not of Chinese origin and therefore has no doctrines explicitly dealing with politics or sociological problems concerning China or its ancient history, which used to be the material on which the teaching of Confucius or the Daoists²¹ were based. The beautiful Lamaist temple in Peking is at present also undergoing great renovation works.

For reasons of differences between the former "state-religion" Confucianism and the new partyline of Marxist ideology the Confucius temples are not rebuild or brought back to life except when used for entirely different purposes like storing military equipment or establishing the local museum in its buildings.

Concerning the Daoist temples we only saw one of them being restored, but in a way that suggested that the money necessary for a full restoration was either not available at all or that the authorities were altogether unwilling to bring back to the masses' consciousness a way of thinking closely associated to anarchism and peasant rebellions such as the Yellow Turbans, which overthrew the Han empire. This temple was the one in the center of Suzhou, and we were surprised to see a Daoist monk of about 55 years sitting inside watching over the behaviour of the people coming and going while wearing the traditional Daoist cap, which cannot be mistaken for something else. In Peking stands the famous Bai Yun Si,²² which is temporarily or forever out of use—it used to be the center for Daoist studies and dates from Tang times, while the other Daoist temple called Dong Yue Miao has been transformed into a secondary school. There is little hope for a reawakening of Daoism here on the mainland, although when in Peking I learned that the Bei Da University was about to give well prepared courses and lectures in that field. I regretted at that time that I was not a registered student at this university, being able to take part in the teachings. However, I was only a mere traveller at that time and had little chances to get into the organization. Those are my impressions I received concerning the once spiritual centers of the empire. Not all is in ruin, but Buddhism clearly has an easier revival than Daoism, and Confucianism is sought to be completely extinguished, at least in its manifestations of public worship.

10th January 1982

When we arrived in Peking that morning around 8 o'clock the town was already very busy and the area in front of the railway station, the greatest in China and certainly not the ugliest, was very much alive with all kinds of vehicles and masses of people. Peking now has around nine million inhabitants and is growing fast. The busses here are the most modern in the country and its subway system will be expanded in the near future. Transportation means indeed are excellent, and the capital has the largest number of bicycles swarming the streets. Embassy cars like Mercedes and large Fiat can be seen, as well as the first few privately owned flash-red motobikes (250 ccm) of the Dong Hai brand. (The price for one bike is around 3000 yuan). Distances are enormous, and the streets are usually well paved, broad and tree-lined. That does not include the old parts of the city, where vegetation is usually scarce and the houses crouching in dense formations not always following the supposedly square pattern of the roads. Some high buildings try to give the place the character of a real city, but at the back entrance one might find the watchman raising chicken in the doorway, and in the small lanes of the older parts of Peking even pigs are suckling their young, with a vegetable garden nearby. There is an architectural blend of more than six centuries, and most of the old buildings are open to the public, if for an entirely different purpose than its planners had designed them for. Vast parks are recreational resorts for the hot and dry months and at least two big lakes are used as skating grounds during the winter. Heavy industrial plants in the suburbs try to put up with the increasing demands of economical needs, both for the individual as well as for export; in recent years the factories have been established more to the southeast of the city, since the wind from the Mongolian steppes was blowing the dust particles and the smog put forth by chimneys all over the town, and contributed a heavy share to the capital's pollution. There is a lot of construction and building activity to keep up with the need for living space, and apartment blocks are rising in one summer out of nothing, occupying the space formerly being the grounds of a charming and coherent Chinese village in its typical design, with easier possibilities for communication and forming a grown settlement quite for itself, while the new housing projects tend to have the same drawbacks and disregard the same principles of aesthetics and humanity like in

every other country in the world. Only the scale on which these projects are promoted has no equal in other countries, but the Chinese are famous for their craving for monumental building activities, at least since the great wall in Han and pre-Han times. Here I would like to give a short historical survey of Peking and its origins in the records of the archeologists and historians.

The remains of Peking Man found at a place not far southwest of Peking prove that the area was inhabited at an extremely early age, lying en route between the Yellow River plain with the mountainous regions in the northwest. Under the Zhou dynasty we hear about the town of Ji, being the capital of the hegemon state of Yan in the north of the then disunited empire during the so-called Warring-States period (403-221). Ji was located at the place which now roughly is the southeast of Peking today. It was a busy trade center. Under the Tang, the town prospered and served as a military basis for expeditions into Korea. When the Khitan, the founders of the Liao dynasty, took Ji in 936, they used it as their secondary capital and called it after the former state Yan Jing. At the beginning of the 12th century, the Jurchen people, pushing in from the north, captured the city and made it their capital of the Jin dynasty. They were undertaking generous construction projects of palaces and irrigation systems. The Mongols in their typical way to treat conquered territory rased everything and when Khubilai Khan in the 13 century imposed alien rulership (the Yuan dynasty) over the Chinese people he chose to make Peking (then called Da Du - the Great Capital) his permanent residence, but had no place to live in suited for his status as the emperor of China. Marco Polo served here with the great Khan. The Khan finally settled in a palace that had survived in the north east of the town. After the overthrow by the Ming the capital moved to Nan Jing in the south. Bei Ping was then the name given to the town in the north, and that in 1403 was made the capital again, now assuming its present name Bei Jing. The town changed considerably under the Ming; new walls were build, the former Yuan section of the town was not taken inside the new walls, but the town was expanded towards the south, well going beyond the old Yuan walls, which gave the city an appearance of a double town, which it still had until the end of the 60s. In Yong Le's reign (1403-1425), the Imperial Palace was rearranged, and the result was much the same as can be seen today. When the Ming fell apart and the last emperor had committed suicide, the Mandchus captured the city after a short interval during which Li Zi Cheng occupied it. The Mandchus, establishing the Qing dynasty, did not much to change the shape of the city; they merely improved the Forbidden City, as the Palace was often called, and built a sumptuous Summer Palace in the northwestern suburbs. Most of the building was done under Kang Xi (1662-1732) and Qian Long (1736-1796). At the end of the 18th century European travellers estimated its population between 2 and 3 million people. Good descriptions exist of this time, made by traders and scholars. When the Europeans arrived once more at the gates - this time to show some "reason" to the stubborn Chinese government, which had not been willing to grant the foreign intruders what they thought they were entitled to - the consequences for the town were serious. The Summer Palaces were destroyed and burned down, and the emperor was "obliged" to cede land to the foreign "Powers" to the southeast of his Palace, where legations, protected by extraterritoriality, could be build. During the Boxer Rebellion the Europeans were besieged here in 1900. The Empress Dowager intended some restauration work and used money officially collected for the purchase of weapons to resist the "foreign devils" to rebuild the Summer Palace as it is opened to the public today. After the awakening of the National Spirit of the masses, ignited at the May 4th Movement and the resistance to the Japanese, who occupied the town until 1945, Nan Jing became the capital again until 1949, giving Peking its old name of Bei Ping. This changed, however, on January 31st 1949, when the Communists entered the town and declared in their constitution that the name of the Chinese capital henceforth was to be Bei Jing (Peking), the Northern Capital. Since then vigorous planning and building has taken place, like everywhere else in the modern People's Republic.

We had obtained a list of hotels in the major cities in China from a friend in Hongkong, and that saved us a lot of time and asking questions. Here in Peking it was the old Student's Hotel, situated on Dong Huan Bei Lu, opposite large ten-story apartment blocks. We got a good heated double room for 16 yuan per night, with a desk and armchairs and a wardrobe. At around eleven we left the hotel and caught the bus along Jian Guo Lu to Wang Fu Jing, the major shopping area in town, to have a look at the stores, the goods, and the people, which made it impossible to walk freely in the street, with one's arm pendelling to the sides, because they were so numerous. We tried to get into a restaurant serving Peking Duck, but it was not sure whether we would have gotten a seat within the next two hours, and besides, the atmosphere of the large canteen-like restaurants in the capital here is not something to accelerate one's enjoyment of the dishes. We made our way through the crowds (it was a Sunday) and I disappeared into the Wai Wen Shu Dian (the foreign languages bookstore) to enquire about a certain book I had been trying to get a hold of since Hongkong and the very start of our journey. I did not succeed, even here, because the book is forbidden for publishing in China (I finally managed to obtain it in Hongkong after our return in a second hand bookshop - it was the 'History of Chinese Philosophy', written by Fung You Lan). I was also very disappointed with the other official bookstore the Xin Hua Shu Dian, a huge two story building with a good counter selling material to Chinese who want to learn English. My disappointment ^{quickly} had to be turned into some sort of a positive first encounter with the capital's bookstores, and I decided to follow my guidebook and walk down to the Liu Li Chang, once a famous street and named after the glazed tile factories which used to supply the imperial officials who were in charge of palace constructions and their roofs. At the beginning of the Qing dynasty the bookshops moved to this area, and during the New Year festivities the bookmarket became a meeting place for intellectuals. Under Qian Long the street became busier than ever with over thirty bookshops and second hand bookshops. Antique dealers and sellers of brushes and all sorts of writing material settled here. Today only three of them are left (bookshops I mean), at the corner to Xin Hua Jie. Here I found still a number of highly interesting works by the old philosophers like Mencius, Konfucius, Hsun Tse, Mo Di, Han Fei Zi and Lao Zi, as well as a number of really old books (older than the oldest books in Germany for example), dating from the Song dynasty. I was offered one of them, which folds like a harmonium and had wooden covers, for 160 yuan, and if I would have had the money I would have bought it instantly, because they are of great worth in western countries, but should actually go into the care of a museum or gallery. Yennie was also very impressed with the works of calligraphy and seal inscriptions, and we spent a good while here while thumbing through old and new books. We went there again before we finally left Peking and bought the books and rubbings which were of the greatest interest to us. We had a good meal consisting of Peking Duck and beer from the barrel on our way home, not far from Liu Li Chang, and I liked the food very much, although the service was about the same here as it had been everywhere else in state-owned restaurants, but we now gradually got used to the matter-of-fact way it was usually performed. Yennie had some minor complaints, but I had a peaceful mind after having investigated the bookshops and was very much satisfied with the food for the stomach and the food for the mind that evening. We walked home that night, crossing Tian An Men with its staunch Stalinist buildings on its eastern and western side, and the Palace in the north, high red imposing walls looming vaguely in the streetlights, which by the way had some classizistic features and gave the place and the streets a kind of flair and atmosphere not very common in China. It was cold that day, maybe -3 degrees, but little wind. We had not seen any major tourist place today, but merely wandered through the streets in the area which is called the center of town. Everything was broad and heavy in a way, sometimes torpid and oppressive, and we missed the little stands in the streets, the nooks and niches where some character would make his living, like in the south. There was ^{still} so much to go and see the next days, weeks, months...

11th January 1982

We got out of bed at around seven and tried to catch a bus to the railway station, but had to let pass three of them because they were so full we could not squeeze in. We arrived at the station and by the time we had figured out ~~where~~ where our bus to the Ming Tombs and the Great Wall had its stop he had gone, of course. The early bird catches the worm. We bought a ticket for the next day and had Dou Jiang for breakfast in a small side alley near the station. We decided to go to the Gu Gong (the Imperial Palace - now turned into a museum), but first went to change money in the Friendship Shop, which is the biggest in China of its sort, and certainly the only one to have German bread and sausages, which I did appreciate indeed. Yennis was more going for the pastry and for some time she was all smiles (usually she likes to laugh more than she smiles - I am just the opposite in this respect). The shop caters to all the diplomatic corps to be found in the capital, as well as to foreign students at the universities and the language training school. We changed our money (the rate of the American Dollar was quite stable throughout our stay in China), bought a few pieces of chocolate, bread, butter and sausage and that evening I introduced Yennie to her first German "Brotzeit". She made some smart remarks, but altogether she seemed to like it. The store is on the same street with the main entrance for the Gu Gong, and it was not far to walk. It would ^{take} several pages to describe this truly ²⁴ overwhelming structure of houses and halls, gardens and gates, walls and courts. The Imperial Palace covers a rectangle of 250 acres, being 1,050 yards by 820. Its walls are 35 feet high, with four main gates that used to go into the four directions; now the one giving way to the east is blocked and one cannot enter from this side. As already mentioned above, the emperor Yong Le ordered construction to be undertaken between 1403 and 1420, with 200,000 workmen being employed. However, most of the buildings now date from the 18th century. The last emperor lived in the private apartments until 1924, being a prisoner of the warlord Wang Zuo Lin, who had occupied Peking and tried to win supremacy over the other regions in the north. By then the Republic had been declared and Yuan Shi Kai was trying to reform it and transform it back into an empire with him being the emperor. The palace has been opened and made into a public park shortly after 1949. We spent the whole day there, until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and had maybe seen a good part of the exhibitions, but all the buildings and rooms are not open, and the exhibition of ancient bronzes was closed. The famous "Flying Horse" from Gansu thus escaped our attention. What we have seen were old paintings, seals and woven clothes, items presented to the emperor by foreign representatives, and pottery and porcelaines of course, pieces of special interest to myself, of which I made some sketches. The display was beautiful and arranged with much taste, simple and the background colour never disturbing the onlooker's eye. The objects were placed on wooden cubes varying in height, giving a good example of how to order space in a limited surrounding. I was very much excited by all the wealth of shapes and forms, and Yennie, who has studied arts, was marvelling at some paintings she had only seen as copies before. We left the Palace, me a little dumbfounded and completely overwhelmed by the greatness and the splendour of it all, Yennie more in a practical mood, saying that there were still a lot of copies in the Gu Gong and that the National Palace Museum in Taiwan had at least as good a collection of paintings. I was arguing that the presentation to the visitor was very good, more appealing at least to my sense of esthetics than the way things were on display in Taiwan. But then, her field of interest are paintings, the display of which is not the same as showing a delicate vase, an object with all its dimensions, which has to be placed in a certain way to demonstrate its style and decoration, and some pots and vases, although of the same size, require more space or light than others. A painting hangs on the wall and the background and strength of light are important, still, it can dominate space, if placed properly. Things were placed in a

neat row along the walls in Taiwan, regardless of if it was a painting or an object, and the relevance of space was denied to ceramics more than to paintings, which have only one side to be looked at. Here in the Gu Gong objects have their proper space to be observed, and most of the time enough distance to the other artifacts to demonstrate their singular beauty.

It was a cold windy day today, but the sky was blue and made a sharp contrast to the yellow and green tiled roofs and red walls of the palace.

When we left it we went again to Wang Fu Jing to buy some ink for my new pen, then had a rest in the new Peking Hotel, which is a twenty-storey building not far from Tian An Men. Here I met a person who could answer my question about a fellow student of mine from Frankfurt, who is now studying in the capital, if the authorities have not decided to send her to Nan Jing. I phoned her later in the week and she was very much surprised to hear from me, presuming that I was in Taiwan. We arranged a date for Thursday to meet and talk a little about conditions for foreign students in the capital.

That evening back at the hotel we were cold and tired from walking "hao duo lu", a lot of road, but we had a good substantial meal (you remember the Brotzeit), tea and cakes, which soon made us feel at home. Yennie did some washing that night, and I was writing what we had seen and done that day, of which these pages here are only a little fraction, some reflections and images of a whole day in one of the richest countries on earth, by a cultural standard. We had seen the very heart of it; how it used to be is a matter of one's imagination, but seeing the halls and knowing their purposes gives a vivid picture of the surroundings of each ceremony and the real life of some centuries ago.

We had seen the shops, noted the prices for the Russian-style fur hats, seen the display of Cashmere pullovers in the Peking Hotel, which many people were buying since they were very cheap, have noticed the difference in clothing and behaving of the people in the streets, seen the destruction of old sites and small village-like settlements in the city to make way for broad streets with almost no cars on them, grey and dusty houses with the bleached picture of Mao hanging near the entrance to gloomy looking rooms, the naked trees and people wearing their mouth-covers, hastening or strolling beneath them. This is not a naturally grown town, I thought, here one will find a bit of everything, excitement and quietude, or complete boredom as a foreigner who has no interest in history or arts, being repelled by the drastic violation of the town and its ancient parts, which are to a great part now destroyed and transformed into modern housing areas. It is a fascinating place, appealing to the fundamental qualities in man. But then, the whole of China is in a fundamental state, raw and without refinement, working for something lying in the far future. What? Ah, yes, naturally

12th January 1982

It was cold in the bus to the Great Wall, which was full to the last seat. The Ming tombs are to the north of Peking, and they are usually visited on the same tour that leads to the Wall. They are located on the foot of some hills now dark brown and dry in the cold gleam of the winter sun, and thirteen distinguishable patches of dark green mark the burial mounds of the emperors, which were planted with pinetrees. Only two of them have been excavated, the tomb of Yong Le, which is the biggest of the tombs and served as an example to the other tombs, and the tomb of Wan Li (1562-1620). The area is approached at on the Sacred Way, with 24 statues of creatures on the sides such as camels, lions, elephants and two sets of mythical beasts not recognizable, but having their proper names in Chinese nonetheless. The site has been chosen by geomancers from all over the empire as being one having favourable winds and waters, driving away evil spirits and thus protecting the dead from any dis-

turbances. Indeed nobody dared to enter the tombs during the last of the Qing dynasty, and the first tomb was ordered to be opened and made accessible to the public only in 1965. While approaching the tomb of Yong Le we passed through the marble Hall of Eminent Favours, which is the most awesome and imposing structure made out of wood that I ever saw in my life. 32 pillars of wood from Yunnan, each about three feet in diameter and of such a smooth and straight appearance that it is hard to believe that the material is actually polished wood, are supporting a ceiling with crossbeams and 28 smaller pillars two feet and six inches thick, painted in green, white and red. The ceiling itself goes much higher, showing a kind of craftsmanship now long forgotten or neglected. The hall is 220 feet long and 105 feet wide; and somehow the good winds and waters might have prevented the insolent tourists from cutting their names in the wooden trunks—I have not seen one scratch in the pillars, but many people trying to measure them by reaching their arms around them; three persons with stretched arms might succeed in embracing the columns.

The tomb itself is made out of marble, in fact it is a whole palace underground, being shut off from the outer world by two huge doors each weighing two tons, which could only be closed from the inside. Twenty chests of jewelry and numerous pots and vases were found; part of the treasures is on display in two halls outside the tumulus.

The road to the Wall was leading through a mountainous area and once in a while we caught a glimpse of the Wall on top of a distant hill or running along its flanks. When we finally reached Ba De Ling it was after noontime. Recently some repair has been made on the towers and passes, and this was the point where tourists were usually brought to and shown around. The Great wall not only served as a defensive military construction, but also as a major communication artery along the frontier, and as a way to transport goods over hills and mountains which were otherwise not passable. It thus had the significance of a sort of elevated highway, on which all sorts of goods were brought along from distant places, and on which people were wandering to their destinations in places which should serve as puffer-zones against the hostile tribes in the north and west. The Wall starts near the sea at Shan Hai Guan, which is the "Di Yi Guan" for the Wall, the first door or pass. It now is very close to the Russian boarder, but once used to be the gateway to Manchuria. The Wall lost its strategic importance after the 6th century, when the actual frontier was farther to the north. During Ming times restoring was undertaken, and the part north of Peking dates from that age. The view along this sleeping serpent of stone is magnificent, and the walking on it is so steep at places that it is more convenient to sit on the hand-rails and slide down on it than trying to walk down while leaning backward, ~~which~~ which is a good stretching exercise, after all. There was no snow here, but on some mountains in the distance we could see something that was either a part of the Great Wall with its light brown stones or a little cap of ice. Scholars estimate that the Great Wall once stretched in a continuum for 50,000 km from the Yalu river in the northeast to Xin Jiang in the northwest, passing through an expanse now covered by 16 Chinese provinces. Today it measures -only- 6,000 km from the "First Pass" near the Bohai Sea to the Jia Yu Guan Pass in the Gobi Desert. If it is to be preserved as a national monument it is one that is in great need of repair. A word must be said here about another "Great Wall" that is of quite another sort. I mean the planting of bushes and trees (if possible), if not grass and reed along a belt of deserts that make up a large proportion of China's north. Scientists have been doing the planting and cultivating of plants for a good while now, and they hope to connect a strip 4000 km long through the dry lands in the north and west to keep the sands from travelling and moving further inland. Much earth is taken from the more fertile areas in the country and transported to the new grounds, with hope for being able to provide sufficient enough soil to create new fields and fight the desert.

The way back to Peking took about one and a half hours. It was late afternoon when we went to the Friendship Store to buy our evening meal, which again was essentially German. We had some beer and put a new film in the camera to be ready for the next day.

13th January 1982

This morning we were long looking for the post office that receives registered mail from overseas. We finally found it at Yong An Lu 121, which is not too far from Liu Li Chang, where we went afterwards and bought some books. The morning was gone with these proceedings and we had our lunch, consisting of Peking Duck, at the same restaurant as two days before in the evening. We were pretty much exhausted by yesterday's trip, and we did not go to see anything in particular today. We were quite content with our books and the food in our stomachs, so we returned early back to our hotel, where we did some general overhauling of ourselves and our packs. We had enquired earlier that afternoon about trains for Qing Dao and Shanghai, to make up our mind which way to go. I wanted to visit the former German Colony, and Yennie had nothing against it. We got along so well on this trip together, never any serious conflicts or any kind of disappointment felt from each other, it was simply a perfect match for the road. I admired her. Things were not always going smoothly, and it took a lot of energy to stay informed about prices and places, or doing that much walking and climbing to regions which were out-of-the-way, but she never complained and always tried to make things a little bit easier. I could not have wished for a better companion.

14th January 1982

We left our room a little later today than on the previous days to have some fresh milk and croissants in the F.S.S., from where we took the bus to the ticket office reserving a seat on the train to Qingdao on the 17th. After that we walked along the east wall of the Imperial Palace and ascended Coal Hill, a park just to the north of the Palace, from where the view over the city is very interesting. Right in front is the Forbidden City, with its green and yellow roofs, gates and halls all very much alive and filled with people; to the west lies Bei Hai Gong Yuan, a vast park with lakes and marble bridges, and on its grounds stands one of the strangest buildings in Peking or in all of China: it is the White Dagoba, built here after the destruction of the Ming palace in 1651. To the north, the Bell and Drum Towers can be seen, built during the Yuan and Ming dynasties, respectively. Some high apartment blocks and broad streets lie to the east of the hill, which was once exclusively laid out for the emperor's use and to his amusement. It was not to the last Ming emperor's amusement, however. He was forced to hang himself from a tree at the foot of the hill, after the Mandchu forces had taken the city. We also took a bus to another park with some sort of a hill on its grounds, which is called Tian Tan Park, and the temple with the same name. This temple formed a vital part in the elaborate ceremonial functions of the emperor. It is a masterpiece of 15th century architecture, built according to the most advanced principles of mechanics and geometry available at the time. The temple consists of three buildings; to the north is the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest; in the center is the Imperial Vault of Heaven; to the south is the Circular Mound Altar of Heaven. The last ceremony held in the building was performed by Yuan Shi Kai in 1913. The structure of the buildings really is magnificent, especially the Hall of Prayer, which is erected with the same kind of trees like the Hall of Eminent Favours at the Ming tombs. The Hall is surmounted by a cone-shaped roof made of 50,000 brilliant blue-glazed tiles (repre-

senting the sky), culminating in a gilded sphere. There are two antique shops near by which sell some interesting goods, including old books. The largest antique shop in Peking called the Marco Polo shop is also in the park, not far to the west from the temple buildings. We bought some presents for friends and relatives at home. The Museum of Natural History is just outside the Temple of Heaven Park, on Qian Men Road. The relics of Peking Man are on exhibit in this museum, although they are only copies of the real bones, which were lost during the Japanese occupation and it is believed that they are somewhere outside of the country, but nobody knows for sure, where. The museum houses a large collection of fossils both human and from animals, has a good selection of shells and an equally large amount of stuffed animals once to be found in the region of northern China. We had an appointment that evening with my fellow student, Nicoletta, and we were to meet in the Peking Hotel at five o'clock. We made it just in time and since I had reserved a table in a Mongolian restaurant for that evening we went there and had a very tasty Huo Guo, or Hot Pot. Afterwards we went to the department store on Wang Fu Jing and I bought the books I had spotted here earlier the week, which Nicoletta promised to send home for me from her school. We all had a good night coffee back in the Peking Hotel before we parted and returned to our own hotel, which had the good advantage of being much cheaper than the one near Tian An Men. We had made plans to visit Nicoletta the following day in her language center which is in the north of Peking.

15th January 1982

We stayed the morning and the early afternoon in the Yu Yan Xue Yuan²⁶, had some lunch in the canteen, where I noticed students from all over the world, a rather illustre community, where I probably would have felt at home. Learning is tough for most of them - the morning is all for studying, and some extra courses in the afternoon, including sports, make it a full time job. In the afternoon we went over to the Bei Da (the Bei Jing University), where I talked to a student of Chinese philosophy (a German like myself), who told me something about conditions here for foreign students. Yennie had a long conversation with a Chinese student, studying German philosophy, and who lives in the same room. Teachers and students are very far apart and do not have much contact outside the study program. There is a lot to say about Chinese Universities, and about the Bei Da in particular. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Americans founded Yan Jing University, located in a huge park in the northwest of Peking, which once had belonged to He Shen, a close adviser to emperor Qian Long. When the Yen Jing Institute, which was giving a protestant-english education to some Chinese of good family background, stopped its courses and moved back to the United States (it is closely associated to Harvard), the University of Peking took over the buildings and enlarged the capacity for students in a short time to around 10,000 students and 1500 teachers, 200 of whom were professors. The intellectuals educated here and on the old grounds of the Bei Da played a major role in the demonstration of the May Fourth Movement, when in 1919 some five thousand students not only from the Bei Da but also from the Yan Jing institute and other colleges held a mass demonstration at one of the palace gates, trying to make clear to the crowds that the Treaty of Versailles, in which the former German possession of Shandong was to be given away to the Japanese, and not, as expected, back to China itself, was a grave injustice to the Chinese people. The students burned the house of a pro-Japanese minister and gave the Chinese minister to Japan a sound beating. The movement was fought against by the police fiercely, and several students died. Strikes throughout the country were held in the same spirit and for the first time after 1911 something like a national_{ist} spirit swept the land. Also for the first time the new would-be scholars were to reach the peasants directly and initiating things together, a fact that became quite evident when

the Communist intellectuals spread out into the countryside, making their points and gaining the necessary support for their cause. As early as 1919 student organizations had been going to the rural areas of the country, looking for ways to communicate with this most basic element of the people.

The Bei Da today is holding the first place among Chinese universities, together with Fu Dan Da Xue in Shanghai.

It was four o'clock when we were on the bus to the Summer Palace, which has twice been destroyed by European colonial forces, in 1860 and again in 1900, as the answer to the Boxer Rebellion. The first work here was done by the Yuan, who rearranged the natural lake, and altered the course of several small streams to feed the lake. Under the Ming pavillons were build, and the hill on which the palaces stood was called the Wah Shou Hill, the Hill of Longevity. The name is still the same today. Magnificent palaces were erected under the rule of Kang Xi, especially the Yuan Ming Yuan. Ironically, when the Europeans first destroyed the palaces in 1860, they destroyed some of their own culture, too. Under the reign of Qian Long, between 1740 and 1747, the Jesuit patres to the capital had a set of palaces built here to please the emperor, in whose favour they lived and taught; a good description of them exist by the hand of Father Attiret. Not much is left now except the palace ordered to be build in 1888 by the Empress Dowager Ci Xi, who spent the money intended for the improvement of the navy on it. The damage done to this palace in 1900 was repaired by 1903; she kept the Emperor Guang Xu prisoner here until 1908. What is left of the buildings is still astonishing; for example the the beautiful painted gallery, a wooden walkway decorated with exquisite landscapes and images from the Monkey's Journey, a famous theme in Chinese tradition. The Marble Boat, on which a large sum of money was spent, is not far from the palace, sitting on the edge of the lake Kun Ming, which covers two third of the park area. Small pagodas may be seen from the north shore, and a number of pavilloms still have their places on the small isles in the lake. It was frozen now and some late skaters were still on the ice, having a vast expanse all for themselves. After taking some pictures of the low lightred sun we made our way back to the gate, where we lined up for the bus. We had dinner together near the language center and Nicoletta gave us some valuable tips about places worth seeing still, because we did not have much time left in Peking. We returned home quite late tonight, had a shower and went straight to bed.

16th January 1982

This morning we had some nasty business with the Chinese authorities. We had ordered a ticket for Qingdao (if one can order something like that), or better had tried to reserve a seat on the train, with sleeper and all. Now it took us the whole morning to make sure that we would get a permission to go there from the police. But the police is only dealing with group tours and not with individuals, and they told us to apply for a permission through the tourist agency, which had given us our tickets. They normally would not have done that without being sure, by looking into our passports, that we had the official permission to go to Qingdao. In the end we had the tickets, but not the right to go there. It was an awkward situation, but we decided to go, permission or not. The affair took all morning, and we were particularly upset by the behaviour of the officer in the police station, who told us to go to hell, in his way and words. However, we did not follow his advice, but rather persued our own interests, neglecting the official's negative attitude.

We wanted to do some shopping today and went to Xi Dan Bei Fu, the equivalent to Wang Fu Jing, to the west of the Imperial Palace. I bought a Cashmere pull-over (27 yuan) and some gloves for Yennie, but from then on we barely needed any. We would go south tomorrow, southeast to be precise. After our shopping we went to see the greatest Lama Temple in Peking, the Yong He Cong. It was build

in 1694, under the reign of Kang Xi. It was used as an ordinary palace and living quarters for the emperors kin until 1744, when it was converted into a Lama Temple, and it still is today. Formerly over 500 monks and staffs, attached to the temple, used to live here. Three hundred of them had come from Tibet. The sect fell into disgrace, however, and the buildings were in a very poor condition towards the end of the last century and the beginning of the present epoch. Great restoration has been undertaken after the Liberation, and much of its splendour has been restored. Construction was still-or again-under way when we visited the place. I do not think I have ever seen such delicate and elaborate Indian paintings before in my life, or statues bearing such a vivid expression. The place is very richly ornamented and the Great Buddha in the Main Hall is one piece of wood, about 18 meters high, and another eight meters deep in the ground. The wood is said to be sandalwood. An excellent collection of Tankas is also to be seen. The whole place looks so rich and wealthy with all the decoration and the golden statues, the painted columns and colourful ceilings, it is hard to believe that it was a cloudy and overcast day when we wandered through its halls. The ceiling above the monumental statue of Maitreya was broken through and a window had been built in a wide frame, letting the daylight in to show all the details of the statue and its surrounding. If I imagine how it would have looked like with the clear rays of a bright sun shining right through the opening, this would have sparked off a glitter much brighter than the richest Chinese temple could have been. Gold seems to be an essential element in the Buddhist tradition, and not to be spared at any place. The imagination reminds me of the image I have of the hills around Guilin; the common picture to describe them is when they are enshrouded in mists, transforming the area into a real fairyland, where one would expect every moment a number of hobgoblins, darting through the hills, or some ethereal creature riding on a flying horse. The place is simply not one for cold reasoning or rational thinking, just in the same way as this temple here was also the center for spiritual actions and ceremonies which some people claim to be above the human horizon of rational apprehension. The more intensive the colours and the gold, the more one will lose his ordinary senses and reach another stage of apperception, which allows the priest to communicate with the gods.

Not far from the Yong He Gong, in fact just across the street, is the Former Temple of Confucius, and Alas! and Behold! its walls and gates were painted brightly, and the walls had been repaired. I will never forget this image that came to my eyes when we entered the narrow road leading to its entrance. On our right was the high red wall of the Kung Miao, and on our left were the grey and dirty white walls of some low old-style Chinese houses, with their grey-black tiled roofs and almost no windows facing the street. The contrast was not only in colour, but also one of a material nature-the houses seemed so fragile and small compared to the long thick wall of the temple, which was nevertheless built of the same material, but through its very thickness and appearance of solidity it clearly showed another dimension; that of time. The temple was built under the Yuan and kept in good shape over six centuries, until the revolution (1949), when it was closed to the public. What was most striking, however, to me when we came closer to its entrance were two wooden gates not spanning the entrance of the temple to our right, but the street itself, thus forming a link between the old temple and the relatively new houses, as if to lend them a hand and support them. Yes, it was as if something from the temple would reach out across the street and touch the houses, kindling a spirit in their inhabitants which has no place in the new society, according to the party doctrines. The fact that the gates were freshly painted in a brilliant red and green for the crossbeams increased the significance of the time-factor in my thinking (wishful thinking, maybe), since we had perceived by some signs like printing books and a slightly more liberal handling of political thoughts that things were loosening up somewhat and the grip on the people's life was not as tight any longer as it had been some years

ago. The gates in this street seemed to me of a symbolic importance, indicating that the past is still strong in the Chinese mind, being manifest in the present through manifold documentations. The Temple now houses the Shou Du Bo Wu Yuan, the Museum of the Capital. Its small pavillons and houses are still closed or blocked to the curious visitor, but its main wings provide the space for a good collections of artifacts discovered in or around Peking, including some interesting bronzes, plans and models of ancient tombs now excavated, and some ceramics. Another wing of the complex is the museum of revolutionary history of the capital (not to be confused with the one on Tian An Men, which shows documentary material from all over the state) showing photographs of Li Da Zhao, the head of the Peking University Library and once the teacher of Mao, what Marxist theory is concerned. Li Da Zhao was also one of the founders of the Communist Party of China. We returned back home ending this very interesting day (all our days in China had been exciting and informative, so far) to have a warm meal in the hotel's restaurant, which was inexpensive and made us feel a little bit more alive after the whole day out in the streets. The temperature never went below -3 degrees, but that was quite enough for us and made us think twice about going to Mongolia or Xin Jiang. Temperatures there drop to about 20 or 25 degrees below freezing point in the winter.

17th January 1982

We had been exactly one week in Peking, counting from last Sunday. Today was Sunday again, and we had to leave. I regretted it in a way. There was still so much to see and to do, and experiencing Peking becoming alive in springtime would be some feeling, but it was not for us, not this time. We checked out of the hotel early and took the bus to the railway station, where we met each other again (the busses had been so full that Yennie was going first - I had to let pass another bus before I could squeeze into the one Yennie was waiting for at the station). After some time and running about we managed to find a luggage storehouse which had some room left for our packs and took the bus back to Liu Li Chang, where Yennie bought some rubbings and a book, while I was making notes about books I would have to buy in Taiwan. When we came back to the station the queue for the Qingdao train was already moving and we were swept along by the crowd onto the platform. In car no. 3 we waited for some time to get a hold of the conductor and inquire about a sleeper for the 16 hour trainride. To our surprise there still were some available and we made ourselves comfortable. We had bought some food in the F.S.S. before finally leaving the hotel, which kept us supplied for the way. I was reading most of the time, and Yennie did some exercise in calligraphy. The train was very crowded, with five people sharing the lower benches. I remember having an argument with an elder lady, who could speak English and scolded me for hanging my shoes above people's heads, which was impolite and would cast a bad omen on the persons sitting beneath it. The belief is that, before Chinese New Year, everything threatening is taken particularly serious, since it would be amplified by the festival and taken into the new year, when it would eventually turn against the unwary person who had not done away with it in due time. I had not known that but was simply worried over my shoes, lest somebody should steel them. Afterwards I put them down, however, and nobody touched them. There is not much more to say about this trip, except maybe that the train was dead on time when we arrived at Qingdao the next day in the morning.

18th January 1982

The Railway station of Qingdao is almost a cosy little hut in comparison to the one we had left earlier in Peking, which is 890 km away to the northwest. Our guidebook was giving us the choice between two hotels, of which one was closed for repair and the installation of a heating system. The air was fresh and cold, definitely under the freezing point, and on the hilltops in the distance we could see snow. Qingdao is a famous recreation place for the hot summer months, and people from far and wide come here to enjoy the cool breeze and the clear sea with its beaches. Early this century these were the Europeans from Shanghai and Canton, now the tourists from all over the world are invited to spend their holidays here. The town itself is rather hilly, with narrow winding streets and a promenade along the seashore. The hotel we tried first was directly facing the beach no. 6, on Taiping Lu 31. It is an old-style European-if not German-house and I felt quite at home the moment I saw the garden and the house itself. The whole waterfront is in style with the hotel, which might have been the residence of some representative from a European country. It was not in use, however, and we walked on (almost everything is in walking distance here) to the other choice we had, the Hui Quan Guest House, a new hotel with ten storeys or more overlooking beach no. 1. People at the reception were friendly and even though we could not prove that we were students we convinced them to give us a room to the student price, which was 18 yuan. They asked for the permission for Qingdao and saw that we did not have it in our passport. Then the receptionist said that there was still time to go to the police and ask them to do it for us, which would be no trouble at all. It was really no trouble at all, because the police was closed. Thus we stayed in Qingdao without the official permission, and nobody was hurt. We only stayed this one night and wanted to take the boat down to Shanghai the following day in the afternoon.

Some notes on Qingdao's history:

The town's history begins in 1898; before then, it was a small fishing village of no importance. Germany was in rivalry with the Tsarist Russia on domains of influence in China and Korea. Chancellor Hohenlohe had explained the idea, that Germany would need a fleet of warships in the Chinese seas in order to safeguard its trading interests in the area. The geographer Richthofen and Admiral Tirpitz suggested the area of Jiao Zhou on the Shan Dong peninsula as a good place to build a harbour, and since the region was rich in resources, the proposal was accepted by the German Emperor. A specialist in harbour engineering, Georg Franzius, was dispatched to investigate and make the planning. When the news of the assassination of two German missionaries reached Berlin, the decision at once was made to "punish" China and show her that the western powers were in no mood to let things slip. Wilhelm the second forced the Chinese to negotiate, otherwise he would send his fleet. The Chinese government gave way and agreed to let the site of present day Qingdao to the Germans, for 99 years. China also conceded the right to build and run railways in Shandong and to work the mines in an area of 9 miles on either side of the railway line.

Within four years Germany built a modern up-to-date town, one of the best harbours that can be found on the coast of China, with electric lighting, and divided the town into a business district, a residential district and a Chinese district. The German garrison consisted of 2,000 men. Qingdao quickly became a major trading center for north China with its deep-water harbour. The Japanese took over the city according to the Treaty of Versailles (which initiated the May 4th movement) and China regained control over its own territory only in 1922.

Before 1949, the city's industry was only producing very little such as oils, silk weaving and the famous Qingdao (Tsingtao) beer, which is a major export article today. After 1949 both heavy and light industry was introduced to the town, and it is still well known for its sanatoria.

We arranged ourselves in the room on the seventh floor as best we could. The heating was working and the beds were comfortable. Outside we had a balcony, which was frozen over with a crust of ice. The view over the sea and the small islands was really something to behold. We had some food in the hotel restaurant, but were astonished at the small portions and the high prices. When we left the hotel a hard wind hit us and we had to adjust our shawls and caps. Qingdao hasn't really any attraction in store for the curious, but it has some special features for the German tourist, notably its houses, which could well be in Stuttgart or Heidelberg, showing their red-tiled roofs and wooden framework, the small oriels and the high pointed pediments. We saw a church (and made pictures of it) which was obviously a Christian one, and its doors were open. We were just wandering through the streets until we came to the police station, which was closed, and would open its doors only every other day in the morning. This was very convenient for us and would explain to the staff in the hotel that we had no possibility to receive a permission; the fact was accepted, as already mentioned, and there were no difficulties. The booking office for the boat to Shanghai was not far from the police, and we noted the prices: there are five classes on the boat—the first class was around 45 yuan and not available to us; the second class was 25.20 yuan and we thought it was too expensive; the third class was not listed at all, but the fourth class was ours for 8.60 yuan; the fifth category finally, having about twenty people in one's berth, only costs 7.20. The distance between Qingdao and Shanghai going by train is 1361 km, slightly less than double the distance by sea, which is around 700 km. The boat is much cheaper than the train, more comfortable and a lot more interesting, since the harbour of Shanghai is something to see that one will not forget that easy. After the purchase of the ticket for the boat we continued our odyssey through the German quarters of the town. Between 1907 and 1919 around 20,000 Germans used to live here and do their jobs. The German governors building is still in good shape and in use by some official institution, and so are the old school buildings, which were simply taken over by the Chinese, sending their kids now in there. On the top of one of the hills is an interesting castle-type of house built out of roughly hewn sandstone cubes; it is a stout and protective kind of a mansion, with several antennas on the roof. The area around it is military terrain, with a number of signs indicating that no civilian is allowed to walk across the grounds. I did not care, however, and advanced the building from the rear (so I do not know what purpose it serves in reality—it would have been a little bit difficult to find out anyway, because military or paramilitary organisations in China do not put up signs at the front door saying what sort of a dreadful institution is to be found on the top floor or in the cellars—some important-looking highrise buildings in Peking, evidently the seat of some ministry or maybe even a scientific institute, are not mentioned on the official maps or in the telephone directory) to make some pictures. Nobody bothered us and we descended the hill on the other side. We had no intention to visit the Qingdao Art Museum; after all we had seen in Peking we thought it to be enough for a while and take it easy. As we were strolling along the streets it happened to me once that a Chinese made the cross when he caught sight of me. I nodded to him and he returned my greeting in the gravest manner. Trying to buy a bottle of beer in this town which is famous for its exquisite beer made out of water from Lao Shan (a well known mineral water in China) seems to be a task for a special agent. We could not find anybody in any shop or restaurant who would sell us a bottle or two. This had not been so difficult in Peking or Xian for example. Selling beer was a public business and we would sometimes stop at a corner, by a bowl of fresh beer from an earthen jar, which tasted cool and rich. Here in Qingdao everybody had to have coupons to buy beer, and we were no exception. We finally got some in the hotel, but at a very high price. For Chinese New Year every family is allowed to have five bottles of the precious drink. Other spirits are available too, of course, although the quality is low. In the F.S.S a variety of Chinese spirits is sold, in nice bottles and of a better quality.

We had our dinner in a people's restaurant that night and the service was exceptionnally rude,if not really lazy.The place was interesting in itself, being furnished with old wooden tables and stools;the ceiling was carved and obviously this place had seen better times.It was cheap,though,and the food wasn't all that bad.We had a nice walk back to the hotel,following the beaches around the bay to the tall building(the highest in all Qingdao), which was finished only two and a half years ago,in 1979.Yennie was complain= ing about its ugliness and the absence of design and decor-the very qualities that are not to be found in maybe 90 percent of the newer Chinese buildings; no matter what purpose they serve,they just serve,and nothing more,meaning that they are build entirely from the viewpoint of functionality and low costs, and matters of taste may be discussed later,if at all.The consideration of the location of a building is certainly not subject to sentimentality or even esthetics,and consequently one finds the most hair-raising combinations of mo= dern and old edifices.This was not so much the case in Qingdao,however,which can still be described as a fairly homogeneous town,having evaded destruction by the Japanese or the rough times following their eviction.The hotel stands more for itself,maybe a fourty-minute walk from the town's main shopping district. I was happy that we were on the ship tomorrow for Shanghai,where Yennie has some relatives,who were already waiting for us.

19th January 1982

We got up at around nine o'clock,packed our stuff,and at 11.15 we sat on the bus to the harbour.The lugguage deposite room was closed²⁷ and we had to take our stuff along with us to the Qingdao F.S.S.,where I managed to buy a bottle of beer which one of the employees had stowed away for himself.We had lunch in the restaurant there,and then walked around,killing time until we could board the ferry.The Seaman's Mission is just next door to the F.S.S.and we saw some people which were either Philipines or maybe Vietnamese,with high pointed cheekbones and a rather thin frame of bones.

When we finally walked through the harbour and caught sight of the ship we had a fairly good impression of her.It was quite new,build in 1976,I think even in China itself;the first Chinese ship entirely build in a Chinese dock and up to international standard(it was approved by an international commission) was only build at the end of last year,or even the beginning of 1982,I am not quite sure.This one was a good one,however,and able to take one thousand pas= sengers in its five classes.When we were on board we were from the start taken into the special care of the Chief Steward,who gave us a place in the third class,the one that had not been listed and available when we had bought our tickets.When we left the harbour at 15.00 I at first did not believe my eyes. My camera was in my hands but I did not dare to use it-the sight was a little bit too delicate and I was not sure if I would be able to explain myself if some= body would come along and ask me why I make pictures of the Chinese Pacific fleet. But here it was-by the time we had passed the civilian part of the harbour with its huge cranes unloading and loading ships with flags from Japan or Sweden,I then could clearly see about 40 submarines lying side by side im rows of ten or eight,and when I had finished counting I was sure I would not make any pictures. Behind the subs were a number of corvettes and some destroyers,with their guns clearly visible under the coverings.Further in the background were ships still bigger than that,but I am no expert in warships,which is why I can not give any description of them.It is no wonder,though,that the harbour of Qingdao should be used as a naval base for the Chinese fleet,since it is a deep-water port and the enemy is close at hand(Russia).If I have a look at the map now,however,I see that it is still quite a way around the tip of South Korea to reach the waters off Wladiwostock.I hope it will never be.

The sea was very calm during our journey and we never felt as much as the low vibrations from the big diesel engines; there was no wind at all and consequently no waves to bother us in our sleep. Before we went to bed we had our dinner served by the steward in our cabin, and a special seat had been reserved for us to see the movie, which was very entertaining, representing the life and hardship of a little smart boy (San Mao) in Shanghai before the liberation. Upon the arrival of the glorious Communists in the city he was dancing along with the first group of people entering the city. What has become of him today is impossible to tell. Maybe he got the official marxist education, later received a post as a cadre, because he was smart and knew what living in Shanghai had been like before; then maybe he became soft, scolded his wife and treated people badly, was consequently purged during the Cultural Revolution and disappeared in one of the re-education camps, which he left with a recommendation letter from the supervisor himself, and is now back in his old position, but with lesser power, because people who had managed to evade the revolution have taken hold of a larger piece of the cookie. This is mere speculation, of course.

20th January 1982

Things were starting to become interesting only at around 1 pm, shortly after our lunch, which again had been served by the steward to our cabin. All the time the sea had been extraordinary smooth and quiet, but it was changing colour now. We were passing the delta of the Chang Jiang, which carries fertile Chinese soil with him, and takes it out into the sea for a long way, thus giving it the distinctive green-brown tinge, which was not a dirty colour, but rather light and gleaming. Traffic on the water increased from minute to minute; big container freighters and ocean going vessels were all going the same direction now, passing the inlet of the Chang Jiang and slowing down before entering the Huang Pu River, which branches off just in the delta and is about 65 miles long, of which half the distance is navigable for larger ships. Here, near the coast, we saw the first Chinese junks, small and fragile beside the big ocean liners from Korea, Japan or Vietnam. Upon entering the Huang Pu River our passenger ferry slowed down to a speed of maybe eight knots and was passing along through the mass of ships lying on both sides of the river, or being tied together with their anchors down near the middle of the stream, leaving only a small passage for the boats coming and going. We silently drifted past numerous industrial plants and power plants, with chimneys like torches, or others putting forth black fumes. Never had I seen such a long and busy harbour, and it was easy to recall the old stories about seamen in Shanghai and the dimensions of their lives and working days. At around 3.15 pm we finally reached the jetty of the company's boat and disembarked; the air was much softer than in Qingdao, much more vibrant and more like springtime. We took bus no. 28 to the Shanghai Mansions, a good hotel where Madame Chiang Jing used to live when in Shanghai, just at the junction of the Suzhou Creek and the Huang Pu River, where the barges sound their deep horns to allow way for themselves; Chiang Jing had this traffic of the barges stopped while staying at the Mansion, because of the disturbance during her sleep. She did upset a lot of people with her snobbish command and her support in the city dwindled and finally was reversed into public campaigns against her in the streets. The room in the Mansion was 42 yuan, which kind of frightened us. Opposite this huge hotel is the Pu Jiang Hotel, which refused to take us in if we were not to live in Shanghai for at least one month; usually this hotel is a good bet for the tourist who travels on a low budget. We were told that the Jin Jiang Hotel had dormitories, so we took the bus no. 48 to the area near reknowned Huai Hai Lu and asked the receptionist about a cheap bed, with the result that we were given beds in separate buildings, for six yuan a night. The hotel is a great complex consisting of several buildings, surrounded by a wall with two gates. We had some food in one of the restaurants and then retired to our rooms.

21st January 1982

A few words still about the hotel we were staying at: it is located in what was once the French Concession in Shanghai, and some houses and blocks around it do not resemble Chinese living quarters at all, but point towards European influence. Our guidebook describes it as a walled, self-contained "tourist city", which is true in a way because of its dimensions and its many shops and restaurants exclusively for use to foreigners or high official guests of the Chinese regime. It features a bookshop, a post office with telex connections, which is very rare in China, a food and liquor store, a F.S.S. and an antique shop. In the central building itself is another shop selling silks and clothes, a bar serving long drinks and coffee, and another restaurant. It was in this hotel that the Shanghai Communiqué was negotiated between Zhou En Lai and Pres. Nixon in February 1972. Because the hotel used to be a former apartment complex in French style one still finds leaded-glass windows, parquet floors and remnants of dark wooden panelling in the rooms and halls.

Yennie has three lines of relatives in Shanghai: her three aunts and uncles live there, together with numerous cousins and nephews of the first or second degree. We had brought some presents for them all the way and were now to make contact with them.

I spent the first hours of the morning at the hotel's barber, who gave me a neat haircut for 1.20 yuan. While I am sitting back in my chair waiting for my hair to dry let me tell the reader a short account of Shanghai's history:

The origins of the town date from the Song era, when the southern part of China benefitted from the massive immigration of Chinese from the north, following the Mongol invasions there. Several organizations for controlling overseas trade had already been established by then. In 1554 ramparts were built around the town to protect it from the invasions of Japanese pirates, the wo kou. In the 17th and 18th centuries trade flourished and Shanghai cotton was well known, employing thousands of weavers in the town; the real development for Shanghai started only when the "foreign devils" came to the coast, forcing China to open its borders and yield concessions to the British (1843), the French (1847), and the Japanese, who according to the treaty of Shimonoseki were given a territory in the north of the town in 1895. In 1854 the Europeans had to weather an attack by the Tai Ping, which was eventually overcome in a joint effort of the imperial army, which was fearing a purge, and the European powers, which were afraid of losing a profitable market in the East. After the rebellion things happened very fast and a number of institutions were created to control the trade between the continents. The Bund, Shanghai's famous business district, was beginning to shape itself. National capitalism developed with the construction of shipyards and textile factories. At the same time, the workers became organized and in 1921 the first Congress of the Chinese Communist Party was held at Xing Ye Street. Half of its members changed lines and entered the lines of the Guo Min Dang, some died to give their lives for the cause; only two of the original members were still active during the 70s. Dong Pi Wu died in 1975 and Mao Zi Dong followed in 1976. When a Chinese worker was assassinated by his Japanese employers the May 30th incident gave evidence of the rising resistance among the Chinese against the foreign intruders. When the Guo Min Dang broke with the Communists in 1927, Shanghai became the site for a massive fighting between armed revolutionary workers and the Chiang Kai Shek - troops, which ended in a blood bath for the workers. The town was under enemy occupation during the Sino-Japanese war.

Since the liberation, the whole framework of society has undergone drastic changes. The European powers were expelled, the institutions were nationalized, and shady elements seem to have vanished from the streets (I said seem). In an attempt to slow down the growth of the town, about ten industrial satellite cities have been founded and enlarged nearby. At the same time, heavy and light industry has rapidly expanded and goods from Shanghai are now a guarantee for quality and durability

throughout China. Sawing machines from Shanghai are to be found in many households in Southeast Asia, and the bicycles match the old British ones in sturdiness and solidity (this has changed now, however. One sometimes has to pay exactly the same amount of money for an old bike made ten or fifteen years ago than for a new one, with the advantage that the old bike is at once available, whereas one has to wait up to one year for a new one, which certainly is another factor besides the better quality adding to the prices of second hand bicycles.) The Shanghai shipyards are producing more than half of China's civil fleet, which may be the reason why the Huang Pu is as crowded as the Allgenring in rush-hours. During our stay in Shanghai we saw the same destruction of old living quarters and exactly on the same devastating and uncompromising scale as in Peking, making room for the new-home projects advertised on Chinese television. Actually we did not only see the new blocks of concrete housing thousands of people at the outskirts of the city, but we also lived in them for some time. The ugliness is beyond my capability as a writer to describe.

Shanghai's traffic is mainly done by trolley busses, but at the hotels usually taxis are waiting for the foreign visitors. 1.5 million bicycles give the city a rather vivid air, and its total population of over 11 million people makes it the biggest city in the People's Republic. Unlike Peking, the city appears to be much more vital and sophisticated, which might be due to the southern mentality of its inhabitants. Shanghai, then, is China's trendsetter, both in politics and in fashion. Shanghai also considers itself the leading cultural and educational center of the country, carrying on a friendly rivalry with Peking. The city supports 16 professional performing art troupes such as ballet dancing and opera ensembles, a circus and acrobats, symphonies and puppet troupes. Its position as a literary center was enhanced by writers such as Lu Xun, who lived in Shanghai the last ten years of his life and to whom a museum is dedicated (which is a matter of criticism on behalf of his relatives and scholars, who view his life and literary work from a slightly different angle than the Communists). Since the fall of the "Gang of Four" the theatres of the town as well as the film studios have taken up production again, making their efforts available to the public opinion, which simply delights in the old epics and plays, as well as in the new films playing in Kin Jiang or elsewhere in the vast land. There are a total of 190 research institutes, colleges and universities in Shanghai, employing 28,000 people (as against 1.6 million workers). The city pioneered at the creation of part-time schools at factories where workers are trained in technical skills. Finally, Shanghai is also important for medical training and cancer research. The city now maintains 380 hospitals staffed by some 80,000 medical personnel. Shanghai also has a teaching hospital for foreign doctors seeking to learn acupuncture.

So far a general account of the city and its development, which was a rather hasty one, and still is.

After the haircut Yennie and I had a look around town, walked along the Bund and Nan Jing Road, the main shopping street in Shanghai. A lot of young people are unemployed, standing around in the streets, sit on the sidewalks or even sleep on the stairs of some church. I dragged Yennie into a bookshop, where I did find some of interest to me, and Yennie herself was roaming about the old books. The store was divided into a section for foreigners and Chinese. In the Chinese store one could find a wealth of old books about history, philosophy, literature and related fields, all at a price far below what one had to pay in the section for the foreign guests. What prevented you from buying in the Chinese shop was the fact that the books here were not for export; one is not allowed (officially) to take them out of the country, whereas the other section sells at a price maybe three times as high for books which may be exported. After this tricky fact was explained to me I refrained from buying the works I really wanted but only selected two small and cheap books from the section designated for visitors. I found out later that nobody did care what I was carrying with me at the boarder, so I might well have missed a good chance there.

In the afternoon we visited the museum, which was completely overwhelming for me, since my interest in Chinese art lies in the ceramics and porcellaines, of which this museum had a better collection and a more comprehensive one than even the Cu Gong in Peking Or the Imperial Palace Museum in Taipeh. Some of the pieces were so unique in their form and design, but nevertheless so truly of Chinese character, that I once again marvelled at the highly developed sence of art among the Chinese race. I made about 40 pictures that afternoon, which to my dismay did not turn out at all because the camera was not functioning properly, as has already been mentioned. The collection of bronzes was also excellent and rivals the collections in any other museum on Chinese grounds. On the top floor was Yennie's domaine with a good selection of Chinese paintings. We did not have enough time that day to see the whole of the artifacts, but we came back twice during our stay and now have a fairly good survey of what is there and what is truly outstanding.

That evening we had our first encounter with Yennie's relatives, who had been informed about our arrival the day before by Yennie herself, who had phoned her various uncles and aunts with the result that we had invitations for the next five days to come. Aunt and uncle no. 2, which had invited us for this evening, did not live far away from the hotel on Huai Hai Lu in a house that had once belonged to them, but that had been taken away out of their hands by the Communists after the "Liberation". One room was left for the family of four, the parents and their two children, aged eight and seventeen. The room was about 13 squaremeters, and the kitchen had been transfered to the staircase, which was a favourable procedure because for one, they lived on the top floor and second, the cooking fumes would not penetrate the living room. The two hosts were extremely friendly to both of us and every other moment the uncle brought a new dish for us to eat, going at great lenght about the meal. Yennie naturally had to answer a lot of question concerning her mother, who as the only one of the four sisters had left the country and settled in Taiwan. The word "reunion" was stated a number of times during the conversation, 80 percent of which I was able to follow, until in the end exhaustion overtook me and made further conversation on my behalf a stuttered mixture of all different languages. We got along very well, however, and the whole family made a very good impression on me. The children were not spoiled in the sence that made contact with them an awkward business, but rather they were of a natural shyness that was quickly overcome by the elder boy, who wanted to invite us to see a movie with him. When we had eaten to our fill (and a good deal more than that - we were both stuffed) and exchanged presents (I received a small set of monkeys for my little sister and a picture of the young daughter of the family) it was insisted that we were taken back home by the members of the family, which was at around ten o'clock. We were very tired and immediately went to sleep in our rooms.

22nd January 1982

We spent another morning in the museum, using the free tickets we had received the day before from one of the staff responsible for the maintainance of the premisses. At noon we wandered through the old city with its narrow streets, winding and twisting, until we found the temple of the city's saint-patron, which is accidently Lao Zi, the great sage. The temple, one of the few of the sort still extant in the country, was at first converted into a small factory for textiles, but then it was given back some of its attraction by establishing a number of stores selling small souvenirs and other items of semi-artistic value, including traditional musical instruments. The temple was very crowded and with all the small shops and bazaar-like display this was the place to contemplate Chinese oriental culture, of which not much has survived, otherwise this would not have been the first entry of the sort in my diary.³⁰ Near the

Temple of the Town-Gods is the garden of the Mandarin Yu, being constructed in 1577 under the supervision of the city official Yu. It features goldfish-ponds, rockeries, pavilions and an artificial lake. The Pavilion of Spring served as the basis and the headquarters for the secret society which was responsible for the uprising in 1853/4 against the Qing and the colonial powers, known as the Little Sword Society.

Since Shanghai has not the majesty of Peking nor the cultural tradition as one of China's capitals, its historic monuments are naturally limited and may be seen in a day or two. But Shanghai has a heritage of quite another sort, namely of the capitalist character, which accounts for its many shops with high windows, where products are displayed which definitely are not all for daily usage, but which also claim to satisfy the customer with a more refined taste, who wants to wear shoes made out of reptile leather, for example, or a handbag of the same material for his wife. A good place to buy musical instruments like silver flutes and Japanese guitars has also opened its doors to the a-little-out-of-the-ordinary customer, and the No. 1 department store at Nanjing Dong Lu is the largest of its kind in China. Several antique shops and the F.S.S. on the northern part of the Bund make Shanghai the Chinese consumer's paradise. Shanghainese pastry, bought in a shop near the Bund, was a significant proof of the German or French influence in the area; it was simply delicious. We passed a shop where motorbikes were sold, 600 to 700 yuan apiece, to private customers. Shanghai is also the city which is most open-minded towards foreigners, and it is no rarity to be addressed someplace on the street or in a park by young people who want to communicate and practise their English. The style of clothes was luan qi ba cao, to say the least; everything from a western-style suit to the outfit named after Sun Yat Sen could be seen mingling with the blue and green cottonwear of the workers and shop employees. Many people wore down jackets.

In the evening we again found ourselves as guests of aunt and uncle no. 1, meaning Yennie's oldest relatives in Shanghai. This family was a lot better off than the other, because it had the top two floors of a house for themselves and their children, of whom one was married and working as a cook in Suzhou in a nursery hospital. The daughter of the house was engaged to the son of the manager of one of Shanghai's antique shops, which we were to visit a few days later. They were all of good character and education, having studied at St. John's university or another major institution in the country (which counts for all of Yennie's aunts and uncles—they all had graduated from a university in one field or another), but it is hard to say if all their spirits were of the same soundness and simplicity, after all this people had to go through in the last decade or two, especially here in the south. We were received in the warmest manner that evening (as on any other occasion during the following weeks) and then the talking started, asking about our trip and our impressions of the country, and at the same time offering sweets and tea. Their hospitality was finally going so far as to offer us to stay in their place, a thing I never had held possible in the People's Republic. The offer came from Yennie's youngest aunt and uncle, who were also present this evening. They said that it could be arranged even for me to stay at a private home, and they surely had the right connections, because they made their promise true and we moved to their place the next evening. After the discussion of arrangements and matters of family we were invited to go upstairs and taste some of the food that the cook, Yennie's cousin, had prepared and still was busy with. We then had an excellent meal consisting of ten or eleven different dishes including chicken, beef, pork and vegetables. I had to loosen my belt a couple of times, each of which was commented on by the hosts with a hearty laugh, followed by the urge to take some more of the soup or maybe another chicken leg, since they figured that by loosening the belt more space was created which could be filled, a reasoning which in the end came close to delicate methods of torture and torment. Everybody was well-meaning, however, and when we finally broke up and proceeded downstairs again to have some more talking and tea and sweets I felt like I had a hard fourteen-hour working day behind me.

After further discussions about how to move and where to go we went back to our hotel, where we assured each other that there would be no breakfast for us the next day, since we had eaten so much it would last us until the next evening; the thought of it made me feel kind of nervous already, but I was beginning to learn how to handle the large amount of food that we had taken in and how to cope with the constant friendly urge to have some more.

23rd January 1982

This morning I finished taking pictures in the museum, which took about two hours. Yesterday again we had been given free tickets by the same employee, but he did not do it today, since we told him that for the time being we were through with the collection and needed some rest. We had an appointment for 11 o'clock with Yennie's youngest uncle at the police (gong an ju), which is near Nanjing Lu. The appointment had a threefold purpose: first we had to get confirmed that it was possible for us to stay in his home; second we needed permissions to be able to visit Suzhou, Hangzhou and Huang Shan (the latter was finally granted in Hangzhou itself); and third, we wanted another extension of our visa, which would expire in two weeks. After some talking between the uncle—about whom a few words must be said a little later—and the officer in charge it was agreed upon that we could stay in their house and live with them for a while (we had planned to go to Suzhou on the 26th). Permissions for Hangzhou and Suzhou were given for the payment of one yuan each person, and we were told to pick up our Alien's Travel Permit in the afternoon before five o'clock. We did a lot of walking in the streets today, wandering about through the shopping district, and once in a while I noticed a characteristic person who did not seem to blend in with the masses, but was dressed a bit snappier or walking at a more relaxed pace, but nevertheless aware of his or her surroundings. They were true city people, in the sense that every city in the world creates its inhabitants to a certain degree. In a way they had a life or thinking of their own, and it showed in the manner they behaved on the street or just looked at the foreigner passing by, if they would look at all, because mostly they would ignore us or our curious glances. The very first evening I had noticed a woman who was standing on the sidewalk and looking about, peering into the darkness, and it was as if this exactly was her element of living, the darkness and the night that falls after everybody else had performed the duties of the day. She was just standing there alone, not looking out for something but merely recovering air and stillness. Shanghai again has the capacity of shaping characters as it used to have, when life was thriving and western influence mingled with the decadent times after and still before the 1911 revolution. Another kind of people is also coming to life again and showing confidence: the artists are back since the fall of the Gang of Four. Theatres are packed again, operas are performed which were forbidden for ten years or longer, galleries are exhibiting all kinds of artistic output, including studies of western architecture and oil paintings. If this is only the beginning of something or a phenomenon which soon will be criticized again and driven underground like the Movement of the Hundred Flowers in 1957, when the control organs and censorates of the state left untouched anything that was written against or on behalf of the state, the party or the congress. It only lasted one hundred days (zuo you), and it turned out to be a much more vehement and massive attack on politics and conditions of people's behaviour who were in power that the party could not respond to it in the proper way while trying to keep its face, so she had to show its real face and crush the whole cultural awakening in the most drastic manner, resulting in the suicide of numerous people who were devoted to their country. The conditions are different today, however, since the opening up of fields of cultural activity is well controlled and kept on a low heat, so to speak, slowly returning maybe to what is considered normal for a socialist society, with the adequate number of purges and banishments of people who could develop into some kind of a leader for his tongzhi, publicly demonstrating his zeal to convert the persons holding the power to a more human attitude towards the masses. Re-edu-

ation camps have not been closed down and with matters being what they are will not be closed in the near future. Returning to what one might see and feel in the streets of Shanghai today, one sometimes not only comes across the kind of loners and people who clearly demonstrate a streak of individuality, but one moreover encounters a sort of young people (not many we saw in these twelve days in the city, mind you, but a few here and there) which walk about with their heads up, and display an air of a successful manager in the western societies, and it is clearly visible that they derive their confidence not from the fact that they are allowed to participate in the construction of a beautiful and all-embracing socialist society, but rather from some activities and interests. Besides this glorious task, like sports or arts or music, performed with a joy truer than any kind of labour can offer, and with a background of a healthy social unit which has absolutely no illusions about China's conditions and its position in the world. There are only a few who enjoy these favourable states of fulfilment in their lives, and they are mostly of the younger generation, which does not consciously recall the scars made by the Cultural Revolution.³⁷

A word about Yennie's youngest uncle: The man was present yesterday evening, sitting in a corner watching everybody, and us in particular, with cold eyes and a shrewd mind. He is an overseas Chinese, born in Malaysia, where he spent his childhood and youth, working as a trained salesman for some firm. Why he came back to China I have forgotten, but I do not think that we missed to ask this question. Overseas are given a hearty welcome in China, once they have made up their mind to stay there permanently. This man had evidently decided to do so, because he is married now and has two remarkable children, two sons. His wife and he himself work in an institute for analyzing the grounds and formations of future construction sites, to see if the terrain is suitable to erect a factory or not. Their offices are not far from Zhong Shan Road, or the " Bund ". This man now has all sorts of privileges, granted to him by the authorities. He or his wife do not have to stand in line when shopping, but they merely drop a list of requested goods at the local butcher or the vegetable shop, and it will be packed and ready for them within the next hour, while outside twenty people are standing and waiting for their turn. I am convinced that the same also applies to medical treatment and education for his sons, or his housing conditions. The man, who must have been held in high esteem after his arrival in China, proof of which are several plaquettes and signed documents hanging at the wall, has understood to grasp the favourable response and transformed the relationship with the local leaders into a lasting "friendship", which means helping other people out or giving them support in their struggle for supremacy. Consequently Yennie's uncle had means to set things into motion which were to the advantage of himself, his family or his political friends, who were holding influential posts in various institutions. His family was split into two by his shrewdness and thinking of advantages; himself a Hua Jiao, he could not really fit in with the workers and peasants of the country, especially since he had held the post of a tradesman before. His wife has studied at university and finished her studies as one of the very best in her course. The first son is completely under the dominance of the father, who has spoilt him in such a way that the young man has no backbone whatsoever; he is not able to make a stand by himself, and is all twisted and curled up inside. The second son is more under the care of the mother (and also the favourite of the father, who might have realized that something had gone wrong with the education of the elder son, and now sympathizes with the natural wit and charm of the younger child), who is very active and has preserved her energies in the most surprising manner, still displaying a youthful vigour that matches her appearance of maybe 23 years, not counting the wrinkles and the puckers of her face and hands. It is exactly her youthful energy and innocent appearance that prevents the family from becoming overshadowed by her husband's political manoeuvres, which we would become part of after our return from Hangzhou.

This family lived in a new apartment block amidst other apartment blocks in a whole town of apartment blocks of grey unpainted unwashed coarse concrete. I have never

seen anything like it in all its tristesse and hopeless ugliness. After the afternoon spent in the city and the hotel, where we packed our stuff, and picked up our Travel Permits, we finally took a taxi into the northern suburbs and arrived at our hosts home at seven in the evening. The apartment building they were living in had as the only one in the area a fence around the whole house with only a narrow entrance that was guarded by an old but alert looking man, who could keep track of all the movement in the house, of people coming and going, they all had to pass under his eyes. We climbed to the fifth floor, being guided in the dark staircase by the hands of the younger of the two sons. Upon entering the flat we were given a hearty welcome from the aunt and a handshake by the uncle, while the elder son had difficulties in clearing his throat and raise himself up to utter something for a welcome; we had interrupted him watching television-the family had a good Japanese colour-tv, which the uncles mother had brought with her on one of her visits from Hongkong. The flat consisted of two rooms with concrete floor and a small bathroom and toilet, while cooking was done in the entrance hall. After we had a meal which was not as voluminous as the previous ones we were naturally asked about the trip and how it was going, if we were in good health and the like. It was never an easy or really natural conversation, even with Yennie's aunt, who was trying to please us in her way. Arrangements for the night were undertaken when talking became a difficult thing to keep up. It was decided that Yennie should sleep in the living room of this apartment, and I was accompanied to another apartment block of slightly smaller proportions in the neighbourhood, where other relatives of Yennie had a flat that was now only inhabited by one of her cousins, a soft-spoken young man, with whom it was no difficulty at all to communicate. After we were left alone we had a talk and I learned that he was a worker in a factory producing transistors and other small-scale electronic devices, earning 46 yuan a month; he also told me that I would have the apartment to myself the following two days, because he was going to Suzhou to spend Chinese New Year with his parents. It was rather late when he emerged from the kitchen bringing the traditional Chinese New Year dish, a kind of sticky rice eggroll, which tasted very good and sweet. The furniture in the room was the furniture used by Yennie's parents when they were still living in Shanghai. It was twelve o'clock when we went to bed, and the young man had to get up at four in the morning in order to reach his train. The keys for the apartment were on the table, and I felt free to come and go the next two days.

24th January 1982

Yennie came over this morning to wake me up and invite me over for breakfast at her place, which we did, slowly letting time pass. There was not much to do this morning, but for the one o'clock performance in the cinema we were given tickets, and we went to see the movie which was playing in Xin Jiang, and featured the relationship between a banished prince and his beloved sweetheart still in the palace, with a number of songs sung in a language of this particular province. The evening found us again at the table of Yennie's aunt and uncle no. 2, the nicest family that one can imagine. They were extremely helpful and tried to make things as agreeable to us as possible. The aunt had planned to accompany us to Suzhou and Hangzhou after she had received notice of our plans from still another family member in Hongkong, but because we first had gone west and north she could not arrange her timeschedule with our voyage, which lasted longer as she had time to shift about freely in making decisions about going on holidays. She was back on her job now, which was export control, especially the checking of pharma being exported to other countries for proper labelling and quality tests. Her major at university was chemistry, and Yennie said she was foremost in her field (everybody in this family clan is a little expert for something it seems), but did not pursue her career further, as a doctor for example. The uncle originates from a wealthy background, and he also embodies a standard of education

and discipline which was enlightening to perceive.^{no.23} His family had once owned a number of houses on Huai Hai Lu, before the Cultural Revolution. What exactly the profession of his father and grandfather was I do not know. The son of the family is a friendly and single-minded young person who pursues his own interests and bears no resemblance at all to the son of Yennie's youngest uncle (who still is in his late forties), who watches television all day, does not seem to be integrated into a group of youngsters his age, but plays the role of an outsider. This family here is a healthy one, including the youngest member, the seven year old cousin of Yennie, who sometimes shows a shy smile but the rest of the time stays together with her brother behind the wardrobe which divides the room into the part for the children and the parents.

We again had a meal which exceeded far beyond our capacity, and I had to protest several times and beckon for mercy.

We had a long busride home, lasting over one hour. When we finally reached our destination of dark gloomy rows of blocks I first brought Yennie to her uncle's place and then went home myself, standing still in the street for a while listening to music from Abba and Boney M., which came from a flat which was still lit and inhabited by some young people. I did not go and ask if I could come in to listen; this would indeed have been a surprise for them, and maybe an interesting evening for all of us, but I decided against it and went on my way for a good night's sleep.

25th January 1982

We had been afraid of it from the start, but today it was to become true: time was not longer ours to decide, but we were organized today by the members of various families, all well-meaning and with the best intentions to entertain the foreign visitors. We went to see a movie in the afternoon, one of those Indian movies that are shown in every Chinese theatre once in a while, and after the movie we were taken to attend the performance of Hong Lou Meng, the dream of the Red Chamber. The performance was quite a good one, despite the tragic ending. We had places in the very back, but because I wanted to take pictures of the actors and their masks and costumes I moved further up front towards the rim of the balcony, sitting on the stairs and doing what I had come for, until I was addressed by an employee and asked to show my ticket. I went back to Yennie who had our tickets and showed it to her, with the seat number on it and saying that I wanted a better seat, because I did not see nor understand what was going on on the stage. She seemed to understand my situation and later gave Yennie and me two vacant seats much closer to the stage. The two aunts who had accompanied us were still sitting in the back, but there was nothing we could do for them and they ushered us to change the seats, indicating that they were perfectly all right. Taking pictures is forbidden, of course, but I had the camera in my lap and lifted it up slightly sometimes to make a shot at the scene in front of me. The performance was a long one, taking over two hours. We had dinner at the house of Yennie's oldest aunt and uncle. They are both teachers at elementary school and at college, and their income is respectable—it must be far more than one hundred yuan, maybe 160 or around that figure. Their household is the most sophisticated, occupying two floors, as already mentioned, and employing a maid-servant for taking care of the baby that was born to newly married couple, the cook and his wife. This maid-servant does not only take care of the baby, but also cleans up, does the washing and the cooking, and one could well call her a real servant of the household, if this practise would not have been abolished by the new regime. Officially, the maid is from the countryside, and maybe she was just that one mouth too many to feed in her family. During this meal the two eldest aunts and uncles were both present, and it became obvious that the younger uncle had no place in this round, uncle no. 2 very much disliked him. We had a place in this round, however, and when we were seated at the table we were given the best pieces of the fish or the meat, along with some light wine, soup and noodles, rice and even some bread that

had been bought for me. As already experienced before we were stuffed like ducks before the Christmas sale.

This evening we also made the acquaintance of Yennie's eldest uncle's brother, who was the head of the Shanghai police force and a rather wei feng de gentleman, a man to be aware of. We had no dealings with him after the contact made this evening.

The train tickets were handed to us and Yennie's cousin the cook made an appointment for the next day to meet us at the railway station. The train for Suzhou was leaving at 13.50 in the afternoon.

We returned home to our present living quarters and I felt strange and sad that night that I could not take Yennie with me to my apartment, but then, that would have been asked too much of our hosts' hospitality and the tolerance of the people who live in the same house with me and in the morning would see the two of us emerge from the flat like a normal couple. It truly would have been an eye-opener.

26th January 1982

We left most of the things that we would not need for the next two weeks in the youngest uncle's home and met the cousin at the station, as planned. When we boarded the train we ran into another friend of ours, whom we knew from Hongkong and with whom I shared the dormitory when I was still staying at the Jin Jiang Hotel. He had decided to leave the city with the same train, which was heading for Wuxi and Nanjing via Suzhou. We later met him again in Hangzhou, where he went with us to the police to extend his visa, but was asked to leave the country immediately because he only had a transit visa which could not be extended by the authorities in Hangzhou since the police in Peking had already been unwilling to do it for him. He did indeed leave the country the next two days, but applied for another visa in Hongkong and went right back to China. I mention him here because Matz was travelling first class, and I joined him for the length of time it takes to go from Shanghai to Suzhou, which are only 86 km apart. The seats were extremely comfortable, there was a lot of space and it was clean. This was the only time any of us went somewhere by train sitting in the first class, apart from the masses.

The Suzhou railway station is in the north of town. Yennie's eldest uncle's younger brother lives here (these Chinese family relations are a little tricky sometimes; everyone has his proper name in Chinese, but there are no such elaborate designations in the English language I am afraid), together with his wife. They have one child. When we arrived there it was kind of a surprise, because we were expected only one day later, but since we were here already we were given a place to sleep (Yennie slept in one room with her eldest uncle's younger brother's wife, while I slept in one room with him and his son and his cousin) in the house, which is an old one and is located just off Renmin Lu in the center of the city. Nobody even thought of going to the police and stating that we stayed in their house, but the neighbours surely did notice us, since the old city is so closely knit and interlocked by construction which makes social control a very easy task for the eager party-member. We encountered no difficulties or offenses whatsoever during our three-day-stay in this house in Suzhou, and I think Yennie's relatives did not suffer from any reprimands either. For the traveller who has no friends or relatives in Suzhou there are the Le Xiang (Paradise) Hotel at 18 Dajing Lu, or the Suzhou Grand Hotel at 115 You Yi Lu. Matz stayed in one of them and he only paid six or eight yuan a night.

Yennie's cousin who had brought us here went back to Shanghai after his mission of bringing us here safely and the introduction was completed, and left us alone

in the care of these strange people, who tried their best to make ourselves feel at home, and which ^{was} accomplished to the greatest part by placing a meal before us ~~that~~ kept us occupied for the next time being. I want to use this time to introduce the other persons living in the house and give a description of itself first. Suzhou is a beautiful town with straight and narrow streets, low houses with southern-style whitewashed walls of plaster and stone and grey tiled roofs with ornaments at the edges. The house we were living in was no exception. It was lying between two courtyards, one rectangular at the back, and one nearly square at the front. The form of the house can best be described as two Us, back to back, with the first or the front-U roughly with its wings, which are made up of the two rooms Yennie and I slept in, enclosing the square front yard, and the back-U again consisting of two rooms as the wings, this time taking a large kitchen and fireplace into their middle. Now visualize the two Us not really back to back, but a little bit apart from each other, creating some space between the entrances to the four rooms mentioned. This space is on the one side a storing place for wood and stuff, and on the other side it makes up the dining room with the table we were sitting at and having our meal. The picture will be complete when I tell the reader that the doors to the rooms were exactly opposite from each other, with a distance of seven feet between them on either side of the two Us' back. (Maybe I should draw a map, no?) We know already the inhabitants of two rooms, which are altogether four people (with Yennie and me six), and I now want to go further and describe the persons living in the other two rooms, which also were four persons, but they had no relationship with each other except that they happened to live under the same roof and on the same floor (there is only one floor). The people living opposite my room were a family with a child, who had been evacuated and given the room in this old house by the local authorities. They had no ties with the old man living next door to them and who used to own the house, but because of some shortage of living space they had been put there, maybe for good. Since we were not related to them we had no dealings with them. We did have something to do with the old gentleman with the video equipment and the colour-tv in his room, though. This person was the father of Yennie's uncle's wife; he was well advanced in his years (he is over seventy), but still alert and active in the house. This man is still I think, the head of the Suzhou Ping Tan Society, a form of singing and playing the three-string lute, which has much in common with mime and theatre, since one person changes the roles and may represent various characters, imitating their voices and movements. Ping Tan is of a long standing tradition in Suzhou, as well as Hangzhou. The old gentleman had retired already, since his vocal organs had ~~by now~~ ceased to function properly, after fifty years of performance a natural thing to happen, but he was still a respected member and citizen of the town, judging from the many visitors he received the evenings we lived under the same roof with him. Before the cultural revolution his salary had been 600 yuan, as he told us, and he was the owner of fine-carved furniture, original paintings from Ming times onward, had a collection of jade and other precious artifacts, but it had all been taken from him except for a few items he had managed to stow away before the Red Guards came into the house. There is no need to tell here, how it had come about that his home was looted. It has happened to so many other people including the younger couple whose guests we were in this house, and those stories are not really for the public—they have long gone by now and nothing can be done today to make history undone. Yennie called the old man "grandfather", and the hosts "uncle and aunt," although they were only related in the second degree, but it will be easier here for me to simply say Yennie's uncle or aunt, or her grandfather said this and that, and so forth. The reader may remember that we were seated at the table and given a meal to eat, while preparations were undertaken to accommodate us and put away our luggage.

After we had finished our meal aunt and uncle came to talk with us. Yennie's uncle was a former teacher at Nanjing University, and according to his own words and the confirmation given by his wife he was a big shot in the field of geography. He was denounced during the Cultural Revolution, was put into prison for some time, and suf-

ferred from some treatments that were given to him by the guards, which made his spine stretch to an intolerable degree. The old gentleman was in prison too, by the way, and after more than one year there he wanted to commit suicide, but his daughter talked him out of it. Yennie's uncle is now employed as a salesman for some firm, where he is completely out of place and overqualified. Nanjing University wanted him to come back and resume his teaching career, but he refused to go back because he did not want to work side by side with the same people that had denounced him once, and are still there. The uncle is a far-travelled man, and knows much about Peking; for example, he told us about the prostitutes there, who are mainly for the foreigners' service, but he had had some friends who also knew about them. After some talking about general conditions in the country we had another meal, this time consisting of fourteen courses, not counting the rice and the peanuts. The afternoon had passed quickly and it was early evening when we all entered grandfather's room to sit down and watch television. The equipment was brandnew, but it was only borrowed from a friend of the family, who had good connections with Hongkong. News were coming and I could not believe my eyes, but here was the German police on the screen, staging a fierce battle against the people (friends of mine must have been there too) who were demonstrating against the plans to build the Startbahn 4 at our Flughafen in Frankfurt am Main. It was indeed hard to imagine that I was sitting in the midst of China, far removed from my country not only in distance but also in time and cultural attire, but still here it was again, the German apparition that I thought I had left behind. Another guest came. We were introduced and after some small talk he asked what people in foreign countries were thinking about Mao Ze Dong. He seemed critical enough all by himself, but he wanted to know all the same. So Yennie told him a little bit, and every now and then he nodded his head, but did not say much himself. His whole house as well as the people it attracted seemed to be much more critical and aware of what had happened than many other people we had met on the way.

We saw a recorded movie that night, interrupted by occasional drinking tea and talking, and the last thing I remember was that I was doing my writing at the table outside the room in the hall, listening to a very good performance of Ping Tan on the radio. I was the first one in bed at around ten thirty, but not the last one out the next morning. In the meantime I wish to give an account of Suzhou's historical development and its character, which plays a special role in the old days, and still is visible now and then.

Suzhou is located 12 miles south of the Tai Hu Lake, and the Grand Canal flows by not far from its southern Nanmen Lu, the Gate of the South Road (the gate itself no longer exists, at least I did not see it when passing Renmin Nan Lu. The town is one of the oldest towns in the Yang Zi basin, together with Shao King and Chengdu. King He Lu founded it in the sixth century B.C. and it became the capital of the state of Wu. A tradition still alive is that He Lu is buried on Tiger Hill, one of Suzhou's famous gardens. In 473, Yue annexed Wu, which in itself was conquered by the state of Chu in 315 B.C., and thus became part of the great Western Kingdom. Qin Shi Huang Di attached the town to the commandery of Cui Ji, which was cut off by Liu Bang, the founder of the Han Dynasty, who gave the area as a fief to his younger brother Liu Bi. When Liu Bi died in 154 the town once more became part of the commandery of Cui Ji. During the Southern Dynasties period Nanjing was the capital, but Suzhou also profited from the stream of immigrants from the north, which introduced new customs and ways in the area and made it a bit cosmopolitan. Under the Sui the town became more important and received the name it still bears today in 589. The Grand Canal was under construction by that time. It continued to develop in the Tang era, and some gardens and historical buildings date from the eighth and ninth centuries. When the Southern Song had to establish their capital at Nanjing after abandoning the city of ~~Kaifeng~~ ^{Kaifeng} in the north because of invading barbarian forces, Suzhou became a thriving city. Its development was twice hampered, however; first by the looting of the Jin armies in 1128, and later by the looting of the Mongol armies

in 1275. Marco Polo paid a visit to the town and gave a vivid description of it then. In 1356, at the end of the Yuan, Zhang Shi Cheng rebelled against the Mongols, took Suzhou, and declared himself "King of Zhou". He managed to stay there for ten years, but in 1367 he had to submit to Zhu Yuan Zhang, who in the following year founded the Ming dynasty. During the Ming the main industry of Suzhou was silk, and the town became one of the important trading centers in the empire. Workers had to work under harsh conditions, and this led to the "rebellion of the five", so called because the uprising had five leaders. On the other hand, Suzhou was a beautiful city to live in, and it attracted many bonvivants and courtiers not only because of the beauty of its buildings and its many canals and countless bridges (for which it was compared to Venice in Italy), but also for the women, who were reportedly of such a refined beauty and grace that the town became the Chinese medieval "red district" of the empire, where gambling and betting was at its high, as well as wine and other devices to keep one's spirit from falling back into the abyss of a "normal life". Suzhou silk and embroidery were highly prized at court, and the last Chinese dynasty, the Qing (they were actually Mandchus), made the town into an autonomous administrative district, so that production could be more closely controlled. Steles dated from 1715, 1734 and 1822 have been found, with texts forbidding the workmen to go on strike. A certain Mr. Huettner, a member of the McCartney embassy in the town, gives a good description of it: "This town, which is the school of the greatest artists, the most well-known scholars, the most nimble acrobats, is also the home of delicately-dressed and-made women with tiny feet (Footbinding). It rules Chinese tastes in matters of fashion and speech, and is the meeting-place of the richest pleasure-seekers and gentlemen of leisure in China. Canals thronged with gondolas cross it in all directions; it is a delightful place to walk in, both outside and inside its walls." Thus, for a whole class of people, Suzhou was an earthly Garden of Pleasure, and the Chinese saying gives evidence of this fact: "In heaven there is paradise; on earth, Suzhou and Hangzhou (shang you tian tang, xia you Su Hang)".

The Taiping entered the city in 1860 without a single blow being stricken by its soldiers, and Li Xiu settled in a palace in the north of the city, which now contains the Town Historical Museum. When the movement failed, Suzhou gradually entered the economic orbit of Shanghai and was subject to European influence. The city was opened to foreign trade on September 28th 1896, and a Japanese and an international concession were created. In 1920 the population ranged at around 280,000, including 180 foreigners. Silk was and still is the main industry of the area, despite the introduction of other industries after the Communists came to power. Needless to say, Suzhou's reputation as the "Garden of Pleasures" now is but a memory in the Chinese mind. Too bad, that. The town obviously is in decline, or "lying low", as the English say. But of that later. When I will be giving an account of Hangzhou's history I will cite a much earlier source than Mr. Huettner's, which dates from the end of the 18th century, and which depicts the city's life when Hangzhou was at its height of power and beauty.

27th January 1982

Suzhou is particularly famous for its women and its gardens. Since the first is hard to come by these days (although we had the pleasure to meet one of them the next day), we confined ourselves to the gardens. These gardens are of great significance in the spiritual life of the people of Suzhou, or all those who came here to look for a more intense way of living. They must be considered within their philosophical context. A garden is a complex or a microcosm, in which a man can construct his world; they used to contain plants (many of the trees and the reed for example had their own specific meanings and served as symbols in literature and poetry), minerals (catering to the Daoist notion of doing research in nature), and animals (they have vanished now, but were an important element and brought to life the whole creation by accepting the walls around it; all that is left of this

element are the ponds with goldfish or carps and a squirrel here and there: "Ach, guckemal da, wie goldisch, Fritz"). Buddhist ideas, especially of the Dhyana (Chan) School, which inspired the famous Zen gardens in Japan, are connected with the creation of these microcosms. Often the gardens have been sold to a monastery at some time of their history, and annexed to a temple, so that monks would be able to meditate here, as the scholars had done before them. The garden of Shi ZI Lin is a good example: it was created by the superior of a monastery. The creator had four devices which he would have to place in such a manner that the greatest variety of perspectives could be obtained as a result. Those features were: buildings, hillocks, which were always artificial, since the town is perfectly plain, water, still or flowing, and vegetation, arranged in clumps, thus constructing groves and passways of bamboo, or scented trees. Hu Shi (lake stones) give some of Suzhou's gardens a very distinct appearance and atmosphere. These stones were put on the bottom of lake Tai and after the erosion of several decades (people had a lot of time these days) they were brought to the surface again and arranged in the gardens to form caves and niches and artificial hills. Many of the gardens and the adjoining monasteries of the area have suffered considerable damage during the Cultural Revolution, but are open again to the public now (the gardens at least).

After breakfast this morning I went to have a look at the bookshop which was located around the corner of our house (next to it is a great open space which should be used, according to inscriptions on the board at the fence, to provide the ground for a new and rather big bookshop or even a library). The books were cheap and the Xin Tang Shu did only cost 12 or 14 yuan, a work of 36 ce (stitchbound volumes). I decided against buying them because we already had left enough luggage-including books-in Shanghai. The Xin Hua Shu Dian in Suzhou has a reasonable section for wai wen (foreign literature). On Renmin Bei Lu is an antique dealer who has some extraordinary pieces in the window, which are not for sale, as we found out to our regret. Inside the shop we found a strange collection of various items such as Co-chips, chopsticks of horn and silver (I bought them for 1,20 yuan), and many kinds of teapots and plates. The shop was very cheap and we bought a few things there, which we picked up the next morning, because we wanted to visit some gardens this afternoon and did not want to carry the easily breakable plates and teapots with us (reference must here be made to Oscar, our stainless steel teapot which has accompanied us all the way from Hongkong, and never failed to impress the Chinese cleaning staff in the hotels with its silvery shine; two cups made our private teaset complete).

We had bad luck with the gardens. It was not that they were still in various states of repair or that it was starting to rain; it was just the timing. One should not make any plans to visit a public place of interest at around the time of the Chinese New Year. Everybody, and really every single creature comes crawling and sprawling out of the house and a good part of Suzhou's almost half a million people go to the gardens, because it's the only time of the year for them to decide what to do with their free time, and they have a few days off, during which we accidentally happened to be there, too. Consequently the gardens closely resembled playgrounds for the kids, which were running and jumping all over the place, but naturally not following the trodden paths that were occupied by thousands of people in blue and black and pink and whatever colour imaginable, and busloads of tourists from Hongkong were blocking the entrance. We were able to get to visit three of them today; the Xi Yuan, the only garden which was left untouched by the raging Red Guards, because upon their approach the old keeper threw himself on the ground and said something like: "Only over my dead Body", and when they were about to make his words come true he produced a scroll which was signed by Zhou En Lai and said that this particular garden was under his personal protection and should not be harmed. They withdrew to find other fields for their dark activities. The Xi Yuan dates from the Ming dynasty. Another garden that we saw today was the Liu Yuan. It was originally the ground for a large country villa, build under the Ming, and converted into a public garden in 1876. I must admit that I do not remember the distinct feature or outstanding constructions of every garden in detail, or if I do see the picture of a certain formation before my inner eye I do

not clearly remember which garden they belong to(I bought a series of descriptions and photographic material in the Zhuo Zheng Yuan, but sent it home from Shanghai together with a number of books which also contain valuable information regarding cultural relics in other parts of the country). The last place we visited was Tiger Hill(Hu Qiu), which is really not a hill at all but merely an elevation of 36 meters, which according to legends contains the grave of He Lu, the king of Wu. It is of great age, and the pagoda on top of it was built in 961. The Han Han spring is not far away from the hill, and a kind of a sword-testing stone is one of the more renowned features of this park, which has everything that a traditional Chinese garden can offer, except for the animals (the tiger that was said to watch the grave was on leave of absence when we roamed the terrain-he knows what awaits him in the garden on Chinese New Year).

All these gardens are in the northwestern part of town or, in the case of the Tiger Hill, a short distance outside the city itself. Dimensions in Suzhou are on a much smaller scale than in Shanghai or Beijing, and walking through its streets is still quite pleasant. The 6,000 bridges that Marco Polo tells us he has counted are reduced to one or two hundred, but they do not fail to make impression on the 20th century traveller. The streets are tared or even have retained their old pattern of pavement, small stones surrounding bigger plates, which must have been a labourous task and a costly one at that. Trees are lining both sides of the streets, and most passages are of a width which allows the upper branches and twigs of the trees to intertwine and thus form a sort of roof, which in the summer gives great comfort from the heat and dust. One sees old gates beautifully carved, windowframes with small figures carved in them, and when we had a glance of some court or private yard we could see the arrangement of pebbles on the floor, in a similiar way to the one on the Greek islands. Outside the doors and gates wooden buckets were standing, elaborately carved but containing nothing but human wastage or excrements. Wells can be seen all over the city, and we had one I don't know how deep in our backyard. People still use them very often and take the water to wash clothes, if they don't do that right beside one of the numerous canals. These canals, it must be said, are like everything else in Chinese cities subjected to the heavy pollution. In the case of Suzhou industry is responsible for it only to a certain degree, while the most part of the garbage and the filth which can be seen results from sweeping the house and throwing it all out of the back door, including items such as umbrellas or goods made out of plastic, which does not decay the way natural wastage decays, and thus gets stuck some place, piles up and chokes a certain entrance or a canal gate. There must be someone taking care and in charge of the waterways, but it was obvious that they did not have the funds or the labour force to keep up with the increasingly serious task. As a result we noticed near the Ping Jiang Lu a lot of tubes about 1 and a half meter in diameter which were to be laid in the bed of the original canal, and letting the water with whatever it may carry run underground. How many canals already have ~~already~~ vanished and given way to a paved surface I do not know, but it must be a fair percentage. I saw an old map of Suzhou engraved in stone and dating from the 12th century, and I looked at all the bridges and canals and streets, and it looked to me as if they were outnumbered by all the passages and waterways which could hold boats, not to mention the small streams and watercourses serving as back alleys for one-man-boats. This is clearly reversed today, and the trend is to get the whole watersystem underground, for reasons of hygiene and because the old system of transporting goods on the water is too slow for modern times and too expensive. It is the destiny of this city that its very veins which gave the city its characteristic charme and supported its unique style over many centuries are now disappearing for but a few broad arteries which remain, flowing slowly like brakish water into the grand canal, which himself used to be the pride of the empire and gave life to far away places in the north. Motorboats are used on the watercourses in the city, and their sound are discernible long before the vehicle itself is in sight, a low brownish affair of distinct ugliness. One may stand on one of the white carved bridges that are still left and try to

make out what in the name of heaven is that sound which fills the air (busses or cars are much more quiet and not so obtruding in the sound of their engines as the modern but already obsolete outboarder that shuffles along Suzhou's canals), and one is likewise astonished what amounts of fumes this thing can put forth while it passes beneath your feet, with the boatman friendly waving his hand. We did not respond, we had to let him go like that.

In the evening Yennie was teaching one of her cousins how to dance to Abba and James Last.

A word must be said about the birds in the house: there were two of them, two nightingales of the Chinese variety, and their cages were placed before the door to my room and in the dining room. These birds are famous in China for their lovely singing and chirping (in fact they are held in high esteem all over the world), and the ones in grandfather's house (it still was his) were very much alive, especially in the morning and in the evening. I had not heard them consciously the night before, but this morning I heard a very long and clear serenade not far from my head on the other side of the door, and I woke up and became very much mystified by the birds' lamentations and changes of tune. It was a wonderful way to wake up, and the same thing happened the next mornings after the bird woke me up the first day.

28th January 1982

We had a car today. Yennie's uncle was using the car of his danwei and the driver brought us to places that tourist busses would go, but no ordinary local bus. We drove through Renmin Bei Lu and picked up the pots and vases we had bought the day before, then went further on to see the Shi Zi Lin (Lion Grove). This garden had been created by the superior of the Hua Zhan Temple in 1350, and was donated to the monk Zhong Feng, who had for some time lived in a place called "lion cliff". A vast number of eroded stones from Tai hu have been used to construct grottos, cliffs, niches and narrow passways, and the rock is so thick and rough that this formation could really be called a marvel, especially since the stones are mended together in a way which is not perceptible on first sight, but rather looks like the whole formation is made out of one eroded block of stone, with all the narrow ways holes to slip through made naturally. I remember that the stones would come up out of the water on one side of the pond in a steep cliff maybe 30 feet high, and it reminded me somewhat of the small lake in Shi Lin with its emerald green water. The water here was dark green and looked very much like the water out in the canals. The whole place - it wasn't that big an area - was crowded with people, and children running around, jumping from one rock to another. It had been the same yesterday, but especially in that place here, dense and scanty with rock and stone, it was hard to bear. On one edge of the pond sits a stone boat with paintings on the walls and the ceiling. Yennie's uncle had led us around inside, while the driver was waiting in the car.

The next place to visit was the Zhuo Zheng Yuan ("Plain Man's Politics Garden" or "Humble Administrator's Garden"), which is not far from the former one near the Suzhou Historical Museum. It belonged together to the Museum (which was then the seat of the Taiping leader Li Xiu Cheng) and had formed one unity. The garden was opened to the public in 1952. I remember the Zhuo Zheng Yuan clearly for several reasons: it was much more open in space and terms of view than the Shi Zi Lin - for example. I like it more like this, and I told Yennie so in the Tiger's Grove, arguing that it all appeared to me to be too close and dense, and that I miss the stretches of lawn and groups of high old trees somewhere. I had seen a fantastic garden in Tokyo in this style, so I knew what it looked like and how it felt. The garden here came closest to the one in Japan, but since it was winter the grass was naturally scarce and many trees without leaves. Not far from the entrance to the right is a pavillon with small blue windows in various designs, overlooking the lake, which is to be

found in every garden in Suzhou. This garden was laid out in the sixth century by Wang Xian Chen the censor, who retired here after a long official career to cultivate his garden, as he said. After the death of his father the son lost half of the garden through gambling—this is how the split came about: one part goes to the museum and the other part is a public garden.

Our next move was to drive out of the city in a south-western direction to reach the Ling Yan Hills. The hills are around 15 miles out of town and from one of them the Tian Ping Hill, one has a good view over the surrounding landscape and Lake Tai. The Ling Yan Hills are famous for the strangely shaped stones which bear significant names like the Tortoise Stone or the Horse stone etc. Much of the rock is very fine-grained and used to be the material from which inkstones of good quality were made. According to various texts, the Wu king Fu Cha had a palace built on top of the mountain for his favourite, Lady Xi Shi. Under the Jin a Buddhist monk called Zhi Ji retired here and ended his life in a hermitage. A temple and a pagoda were built under the Song, which in a reconstructed version can still be seen today. The Rock of Spirits Temple stands on top of the hill, and I remember it to be a rather large one with its proper walls and employees taking care of it very well. The temple was still in service in 1968, but when we were there we could not make out any religious activities, despite the fact that a few old people had burned incense and that we saw a monk or two in the courtyards and the hallways. What we saw was a younger person shooting sparrows from the niches of the old Ming Pagoda in the eastern court, thus inflicting more damage to it than the birds themselves. However, I liked the place, and it will not be long that it will enter the cycle of Buddhist prayers again, I hope. It looked very much like it.

A thing that took me completely unawares and left me speechless was the fact that as soon as our car had stopped a few local people came to offer us their chairs to sit in, while they would carry us up the hill. This old Chinese custom I thought had been abandoned and done away with, especially because it was so vehemently argued against by anti-capitalist and anti-feudal intellectuals shortly before and after the revolution of 1949, and I firmly believe that the idea of serving the capitalists from overseas or the guests from Hongkong in this manner had been one which was and probably is still very much despised by party officials and cadres. It reminds the Chinese mind very much of the past, when they had been the complete underdog in their own country, used and exploited by foreign devils. The idea of the Rickshaw and its abandonment springs from the same consciousness of inferiority. Nevertheless, here we were offered a chair which would be carried for a charge of 5 yuan with one man in the front and two men or women in the back up the hill, stopping at your command, or resuming its laborous pace up the path. On coming down we saw a big fat Hongkong mama sitting in the chair—which by the way was a brandnew one—and smiling a sheepish smile into our direction. I took some pictures of the scene, but like all the rest they did not turn out at all. I do not know how this "business" with foreigners came into existence again, and I am not sure if it has the allowance of the local authorities, but I am absolutely positive that when the fact will be known and spreads through the country many voices will be heard shouting; "Traitors."

We had a meal with the uncle of Yennie and our driver in a restaurant at the foot of Ling Yan Shan, before we went on to the Tian Ping Hill, where we climbed to the top to find a lively society of Chinese and Hongkong tourists and an old man selling cool beer. We climbed a high rock above the plateau which forms the top of the hill and enjoyed the view while drinking our beer. The weather was all right, it was not too cold to sit outside in the pale sun, and in our house in Suzhou we had no heating anyway—only a stove in the kitchen that was used for cooking. We by now were used to the rough outdoor climate, had something like a constant cold which did not bother us very much if we were not eating very hot soups, but besides we were in a pretty good shape.

The evening we spent in *Kreise der Familie*, as we say in Germany, which means in the family circle, listening to music and I, of course, was doing my writing after we had dinner. The next day was to be our last in Suzhou; we wanted to go to Hangzhou by

using the rivercraft that was going down the Grand Canal during the night to Suzhou's sister-town, which is not as famous for its gardens but more so for the Xi Hu, the Western Lake.

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I forgot to mention another place that we visited yesterday while coming back from the Ling Yan Hills. It is a garden called the Garden of the Pavillon of Waves (Cang Lang Yuan or Ding) and is a very old creation dating from the Song dynasty, laid out 1044. Under the Southern Song it belonged to Han Shi Zhong, a general who fought against the Jin. A monastery owned it under the Yuan, and let it go to ruin. A monk restored it under the Ming dynasty, and under the reign of Kang Xi; it was destroyed during the Taiping rebellion to some extent, and re-made in 1873, to be finally restored and opened to the public in 1954.

What struck me most in the Cang Lang was the many covered walkways along the artificial slopes and around the small pond, which was covered with lotus petals. These walkways had windows of which every one was very different from the other, and metal bars in many traditional designs could be seen³⁵. The walkways are made of stone or brick, painted in white and some parts of them have paintings or hold stone engravings of various dates and shapes. Some are from Ming times still. A special thing to enjoy was the exhibited furniture in the pavillon itself, which is actually much more a kind of mansion than what one imagines when hearing the word "pavillon". Some of the furniture was in a very graceful and slender design, while other pieces were heavy with knots and looked like as if twisted roots had been used to make this armchair here or the table inlaid with jade that was standing under the window. The area around the garden is also particularly nice, and a bridge spans the narrow canal that flows along the wall to the north.

What we did today was going to have a look at the Town Historical Museum, which has a fairly good selection of strangely formed ceramics and the premises themselves are a delight to roam. The exhibition covers the whole history from pre-historic times down to the Taiping and the 1949 revolution. It was here that I saw the old map engraved in smooth black stone, showing me a Suzhou that was quite different from the one today, not so much what the shape of the town is concerned, but rather its many waterways and bridges gave the town a very lively character, made it kind of a precious piece of art with all the minute details and decors, which it no longer has in the streets or the houses to such an extent.

Near the museum is the Bao En Si, a pagoda dating from the 10th or 11th century. The site it stands on was the ground for a temple built by one of the kings of Wu, 300 years before our time starts. The pagoda is a high impressive building, made out of wood and painted in different now fading colours.

On the same street with the F.S.S. and the Xin Hua Shu Dian is the entrance to the Daoist temple Xuan Miao Si, the Temple of Mystery. It was originally founded in the 3rd century ad., but the present buildings are from the 18th and early 19th century. Restoration was under way while we visited the temple (we went there twice), but everything was done so roughly and in such a hurried way that it looked pretty awful. The San Qing were there, however, and a Daoist monk (the only one I ever saw in the People's Republic) was sitting near the entrance, contemplating the mystery of his existence I guess. He looked very absentminded to me, but it was a good sight to behold, anyway. The temple covers a rather large area, and all around the buildings small shops and stands are situated selling food or beverages, repairing shoes or handbags.

It also must be mentioned that in the Xi Yuan that we had visited the first day a hall with 500 luohan or Buddhas may be seen, each one delicately modeled out of terracotta if I remember well, with faces and figures very different from one another. In the middle of the hall a construction stands showing on its four sides the four

Holy Mountains of China, each one elaborately styled and designed.

This day Yennie's uncle was back at his work, so we were on our own for the time until the boat was about to leave, which was in the late afternoon at around 5.45. We had bought our tickets the day before and had managed to get a second class sleeper cabin, which holds four beds, as we were to discover later. Before we finally had to leave the house and our friendly and warm hosts we were asked to take pictures of them. For that occasion everybody had put on better clothes, and the two women in the household had gone to the Li Fa Tang to get a hairstyle that would suite them. We also met the fiancée of one of Yennie's cousins, who might have been something like a beauty for which Suzhou has been so famous, and she certainly was not of the common people. We took pictures as we had been asked to do (a very meagre "Thank You" that we could say in return to all the hospitality we had received here in this house), and thought we were doing fine, but as the reader already may guess the pictures were not exposed due to some fault with the camera and everything had been in vain. When Yennie's mother in Taiwan asked me about pictures of her sisters and nephews and nieces I had nothing that I could give to her, which made me feel pretty lousy.

We had another meal and then were accompanied to the boat by Yennie's uncle who had taken care of us in such kind manner, and by the young couple who were to marry soon. The young man was going with us on the same ferry to Hangzhou, since his holidays were over and he had to get back to work, which was related to the field of his grandfather, I think.

After a long fare-well from our hosts we got on the boat and established ourselves in the cabin. At the last moment Matz appeared from I don't know where, together with several other people from Europe, but we could not do much for them. They only had a third class ticket with no bed to stretch out, but since Matz was a friend of ours Yennie's uncle offered to get a better place for him on one of the boats. There were four of them altogether, two and two towed to each other, and we were on the first boat, but were overtaken during the night by the second convoy with Matz on board, who had a place of his own in a kind of storage room, and afterwards he said it was a strange place to be during the night. We ourselves had a very pleasant bed to sleep in and after all the things we had seen and done in Suzhou we needed it. The ticket for this twelve hour trip, which starts in Suzhou at around six o'clock in the afternoon and reaches Hangzhou the next morning at around seven o'clock is 4.10 yuan in the second class.

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The journey on the venerable Grand Canal was just as smooth as the trip from Qingdao to Shanghai had been, and nothing disturbed our sleep during the night. The boats had been in service for a long time, I presume, and had gradually taken on the colour and the smell of the surrounding they were operating in. Upon our arrival and disembarkment in Hangzhou this morning we had to wait for the last of the boats carrying Yennie's cousin with him, who wanted to try and take us with him to his apartment in town. We walked to his place after he had arrived, but the person in charge refused to let us stay in the house, which was mainly inhabited by young actors and persons attached to the local theatre, such as Yennie's cousin. We had to say goodbye for the time being after it became clear that we could not stay in his place. He insisted, however, to show us the way to one of the hotels in town that caters to foreigners, so we took the bus to the Hua Jiao hotel, where usually guests from Hongkong are accommodated. At the reception we were told that we could have a room for 27 yuan, which was not exactly what we had hoped for. Yennie's cousin said that we could try the Hangzhou Hotel on the other side of the lake, but he had to go back and get in touch with his troupe, so we said good by to him and took the bus around and across the Xi Hu to the western side, where we got off exactly in front of the Yue Fei Temple, from where we walked back a

short distance to the Hangzhou Hotel, one of the finest hotels in all over China, and probably the one with the most charming surroundings. To our delight we were to hear that there were still beds available in the dormitory for 6 yuan per night. We took possession of our beds (which were in two different rooms, of course), and I decided to wait here in Hangzhou for the spring to come, no matter how persisting the winter was this year. As it later turned out he was rather persisting, and when we returned to Hangzhou two weeks later we had snow. The weather today was fine and the temperature was not too cold, and with our room heated we had really no complaints whatsoever.

The reader may at this point allow me to make some general remarks about the town and give a short outline of Hangzhou's historical and cultural development.

Hangzhou is 189 km from Shanghai to the south-west, and 275 km from Suzhou, which lies on the Grand Canal as we took the boat overnight to get here. Hangzhou's geographical situation is determined by the river Qian Tang, which flows into the sea 25 miles to the west. To the east of the town is famous Xi Hu, or Western Lake. All around the lake are hills with caves and carvings, temples and famous springs, and small villages whose main concern it is to grow and process tea, the famous Long Jin Tea.

Hangzhou is not as old as Suzhou. It really came into existence when the Grand Canal had been completed in 610, and Hangzhou makes up the southern end, while the northern end is Peking, the distance between the two places being around 1500 km.

The sea near Hangzhou has heavy tides, especially around the time of the equinox, when the tide rushes inland and leaves vast areas of fields under water when it retreats again. During Han times already a dyke was built to protect the place, which was by then a small fishing village. Little by little, the flow of the Qian Tang Jiang and the tide combined to form a coastline which linked the Bao Shi Hill in the north with the Wu Hill in the south, leaving a basin which was filled with the waters now called the Xi Hu. A settlement was then founded on a treacherous place between the lake on one side, and the river and the sea on the other side. During Tang times fortifications were built to protect the now prospering town, and the lake itself was divided by sandbanks to secure the floods raised by winds coming from the sea to spread all over the lake, but it was intended to brake the tide at several points through dykes and banks. Governor Li Bi did the first real improvement in 799, who had two locks with bridges built. When Bai Ju Yi, the famous poet-official, became Governor of Hangzhou, he fortified an already existing dyke, which now bears his name, in the lower part of the lake in the western section. Another device used by him to control the tidal floods was praying. One century later, in 910, the governor Qian Liu began to have the sea wall built which still exists today. At one period of the time when people were working on it the waves were washing over it day and night, threatening to tear down what had been build up already. Qian Liu thus treated the God of the Floods like an enemy and stationed several hundred archers on the bank to shoot at the crests of the waves; at the same time he too did some prayers and composed a poem warning the water god that he wanted to have this dam built, and that he would fight for it. The river and sea gods were so overcome with awe by the resolution this man showed that they retired and took to storm against the opposite bank (this is a famous legend from the south, which one finds represented in many ways in the works of art of this area). The poet Su Dong Po of the (northern) Song dynasty had a most famous dyke built across the lake when he was governor of Hangzhou. He had the sandbank reinforced that separates the western part by a dyke which still bears his name.

We will leave the lake alone for a moment now and concentrate on the development of the town itself, which now was beginning to undergo an astonishing boom, which was to last for many centuries until the Taiping took the city and did a tremendous job of destruction.

After the fall of Bian Jing (Kaifeng) in the north the imperial court wandered around for some time looking for a place to settle down. The choice eventually

was Hangzhou, because the surroundings proved to be advantageous in defensive battle against the invading Jin forces. These invaders stayed in the north, however, and thus the empire was divided into a north-south kingdoms with two capitals. The town of Hangzhou consequently began to flourish as never before. The pattern of the city was the traditional grid-pattern with streets in right angles and the Imperial Way running from north to south. Many vivid accounts of the town's condition exist still today. I would like to cite Etienne Balazs' translation of a 13th century source, the Meng Liang Lu, written by Wu Zi Mu.³⁸ It must be noted first that the Southern Song referred to Hangzhou only as a "temporary residence", thus demonstrating its firm intentions of reconquering the occupied parts in the north.

At around that time there lived in Hangzhou over 200,000 families, which means that population was well over one million (given an average of five persons per household). This figure comprises both the people living inside and outside the walls. The city was now at one and the same time not only the residence of the emperor and his court, but also, from the point of view of civil administration, a prefecture embracing several subprefectures, the seat of a higher prefecture, the capital of a province (which it still is today - the province is Zhe Jiang, the native province of Yennie's family), and the capital of the empire; furthermore the military character of the town was stressed by the fact that the Imperial Guard was stationed here. The area then covered by Hangzhou was very large, the outer wall measuring 23 miles in circumference. Irrigation works were always of primary importance to the town, not only for reasons of providing the population with drinking water but also to fight hazardous fires. A fire in 1201 for example destroyed 52,000 houses in a blaze, and another one shortly afterwards left only the foundations and ashes of 58,000 houses and several government buildings behind. The fourteen fire brigades within the wall and the nine without had a tough job I presume. At the most vulnerable places in the town, where the streets were narrow and every inch of space was occupied (there is no doubt that Hangzhou was overpopulated), so that traffic was congested, there were watchtowers that gave warning at the slightest suspicion of smoke, by means of flags or, at night, with lanterns. Houses and land in Hangzhou was both in private hands as well as belonging to the state. And since rents were always rising, the government from time to time decreed remissions of rent - either exemptions or temporary reductions - for political or religious reasons, to pacify the public opinion. The poor people of Hangzhou paid their rent on a daily basis. The Meng Liang Lu says about it: "The office for letting shops and multi-storied houses is to the north of the Liu Fu bridge. The state authorities have installed employees there to control the letting of these houses, according to the number of people dwelling in them, and to collect and control the rents paid by the tenant families and the annual payment of rents for land not built on."

The Meng Liang Lu makes it clear in another passage what was mentioned earlier about exemptions and reductions of rents, which were granted when the people were in want, or when "unreasonable frosts", snow and rain hindered production and agricultural growth, or on the occasion of the birth of a prince and the birthday of Their Majesty. All this shows the fundamental difference between a western and an eastern or Chinese town from the sociological point of view: It was and still is the bureaucratic state and not the patricians or the bourgeoisie that owns the greater parts of real estate, and nobody may interfere with edicts and regulations set up by the bureaucrat-official class or the Imperial Household. The non-existence of a real bourgeoisie or a recognized middle-class is a very interesting phenomenon in Chinese society, and its importance can not be overestimated in our search for the reasons why China never brought forth capitalist notions on its own or why reforms in the all-important 19th century were proposed but could not win support on a broader basis and thus failed to find the emperor receptive to engineer them. I will now come back to the description of the town and quote Balazs himself, who writes: "Let us proceed on a conducted tour of the town, whose

narrow streets, sometimes paved, and always smelly, maybe full of the stale odors of cooking but are overflowing with life, noise and incessant activity (under the Mongol rule a curfew was introduced, though). There are shops and booths in every nook and cranny. The trades and guilds, once confined to their own quarters, or each having its special street, have spread all over town, as have the markets. There are two dozen trades, ranging from weaver (of silk) and tailors, through masons and carpenters, potters and brickmakers, to gilders, lacquer workers, and makers of oil and candles. Merchants are even more numerous, for Hangzhou is first and foremost a commercial city. Hard pressed by the government—they have to pay all sorts of taxes and tolls whose arbitrary nature was more burdensome than the actual amounts paid—and looked down upon by the officials, the merchants nevertheless manage to arrange things for themselves (bribes was a very common method to come to terms with the officials), do good business and become rich. Let us now take a walk in the heart of town and follow our guide the Meng Liang Lu, to the rice markets. It says! "In Hangzhou the houses are crowded close together and the number of inhabitants, within and without the walls, is certainly more than one million individuals. Apart from the amount consumed by the government offices and the palaces, the families of officials, the household of wealthy families, and also the salaried employees of all the administrative departments, the daily consumption of the ordinary people is certainly no less than 1,000 to 2,000 piculs (140 to 280 tons a day). They all have to get it from the shops. Thus our prefecture depends on a supply of rice from other parts of the country, which comes to the markets from Suzhou, Huzhou, Xiuzhou, the Huai River region, and Canton. The Huzhou-market Bridge, and the black bridge are where the rice-guilds are situated, and there all the merchants from other parts sell their grain. There are numerous varieties of rice, such as early rice, late rice, new-milled rice, winter-husked rice, first quality white rice, medium quality white rice, lotus-pink rice, yellow-eared rice, rice on the stalk, ordinary rice (what may this be?), glutinous rice, ordinary yellow rice, short-stalked rice, pink rice, yellow rice and old rice."

This list of rice varieties shows clearly the ingenuous pride of the author in his command of the subject and, even more, his pride in the sheer existence of so many products. The Meng Liang Lu continues:

"Let us now speak of the shops within and without the walls. Every shopowner depends entirely on the head of the guild for fixing the market price. The rice is sent direct to each shop and put on sale there. The shopkeeper arranges a fixed day for payment for his supply of rice, whereas the small agents at the rice market go in person to each store to make delivery to their clients... The town of Hang always likes rice-barges to be coming in pell-mell from all parts and finds it very convenient that they should arrive all day long without pause. Besides there are, of course, people there for unloading the sacks, and the porters and coolies have their chiefs who are in command over them. Each boat has its boatman, who receives the cargo. Although transport arrangements at the rice market are complicated, there are never any disputes or altercations. In this way the shopkeepers spare their energies and the rice is brought directly to the shops."

This kind of an organization of wholesalers and retailers, together with the credit system (which I think is too dry a topic to make an outline of it here), comes close to the situation we have nowadays in the big cities. Every guild, be it the butchers or the fishshops were organized on the same or a similar basis. About a hundred animals were slaughtered daily.

A passage of more general interest in the Meng Liang Lu describes the street-sellers and the fishmerchants:

"The population of Hangzhou is very dense both outside and inside the walls, and the town stretches over a wide area. In no matter what district, in the streets, on the bridges, at the gates (there were 18 of them), and in every odd corner, there are everywhere to be found barrows, shops, and emporiums where business is done. The reason for this is that the people are in daily need of the

necessities of life, such as firewood, rice, oil, salt, vinegar, soya sauce, and tea, and to a certain extent even of luxury goods, while rice and soup are absolute essentials, for even the poorest cannot do without them. To tell the truth, the inhabitants of Hangzhou are spoiled and difficult to please.

Let us take fish, for example. This merchandise comes from the commanderies of Wen, Tai, and Si Ming (which is Ningbo—all three places are in Zhe Jiang). On the south side of the town, near the sluice-gate against the impure water (of the river Zhe), the guilds of the merchants from other parts of the country assemble. That is where both fresh and salt fish are collected together, and where the market is held for the fishmongers from inside and outside the town, not less than 100 or 200 in number. I list here all the various items sold by the fishmongers... The fishmongers also sell salt provisions, silver fish, crabs, dried fish from the Huai, small crabs, salted duck, fried duck, fried mullet, frozen fish, frozen dried fish, fried bream, loach fried in batter (not butter), fried eel, boiled fish, and white shrimps fried. In addition, these goods are sold by hawkers in the streets, to satisfy the needs of customers in the little lanes and alleyways, which is very convenient."

There were innumerable inns, restaurants, taverns, drink shops, teahouses, and bars in town, which are all given a general description of in our guide, together with a sort of establishment where "a decent man does not set foot". Balazs says: "The restaurants and taverns of Hangzhou were both varied and highly specialized. There were also other places called "The happy meeting", or "The Seduction", or "The Pleasures of Novelty". These places had singing-girl-waitresses, which was a feature of every Chinese luxury class establishment, but the difference here in Hangzhou was that it was not ordinary prostitution, but rather the special phenomenon of state prostitution. This was due to the stationing of troops in the town during the Southern Song. Since the soldiers were far from home, the government, in order to provide some cheer for them, established places for selling alcoholic liquors as a sideline to the state distilleries and installed prostitutes in them to augment the sale of liquor. In addition, they built about a dozen brothels—or, if you prefer, licensed houses—near the barracks. It is clear from all the contemporary texts that this prostitution, although socially disreputable, was encouraged and organized by the state (who was perfectly in line with Confucianism in that aspect) for fiscal reasons, for all the texts agree that the tax on alcoholic was one of the Treasury's biggest revenues. The names of the most celebrated courtesans of the time—highly cultured ladies who were the friends of powerful ministers—have been preserved for us in the descriptions of Hangzhou; but it was in the streets and taverns and public houses that the shock troops of waitresses-singing-girls-prostitutes were to be found, waiting there, as the Meng Liang Lu puts it, "for the young men of fashion to come and buy a smile from them, and busy themselves in the pursuit of pleasure". All sorts of upstarts filled the pleasure-grounds (Wa Zi). There were beggars and loafers, peddlers and dancers, acrobats, jugglers, singers and actors. All these people emerging from the interstices of the social structure (according to Confucianism they could not be counted for as belonging to one of the four social classes, of which two were disreputable anyway) contributed greatly to the rise of the two new literary genres during the late Song and the Yuan dynasty: the novel and the drama. All these actor-playwriters, novelists and theater people were looked upon for a long time (just like in our countries in the west—now Reagan is President of the United States), but they definitely made the place more interesting, I must say, and including the artists of other fields they were a very distinctive class in a highly cultivated society.

Hangzhou was thus closely linked to Suzhou in terms of pleasure and recreation, but it surpassed Suzhou as a center of commerce and capital far in the fields of finances. Let us take a look at the state's income and revenues in the 12th and 13th century, when Marco Polo visited China and eventually came down to Hangzhou to find the town as we have described it (the exotic aspect of Marco Polo's notes is often overstressed, says Balazs, and he is probably right). The total revenue of the

Southern Song, Balazs writes, although subject to a fairly wide variation, was accounted for in the main by following items: receipts from the salt tax, 50 per cent; rights concerning alcoholic liquors, 36 per cent; tea monopoly 7 per cent; tolls, customs and commercial tax, 7 per cent. Since these sources of revenue consisted mainly in taxes on articles of consumption, there is no need to explain why a town like Hangzhou played such a preponderant role in contemporary finances."

So far Balazs and his translations from the Meng Liang Lu of 1274.

In 1276 Hangzhou was taken by the Mongol forces, and South China was assimilated into the Yuan empire, but all this did not bring about the immediate downfall of the town of Hang. It remained a major trading center for southern China.

During the Ming dynasty the town retained its importance; the silk industry developed there, at the same time as in Suzhou. The walls were rebuilt in 1359, but nothing of them remains to be seen today. Under the Qing the town was widely known as a place to rest and enjoy oneself, just like Suzhou, and the town lived from its trades and its tourists. The first real tourist guides were distributed in 1584, which would be before Qing times. The emperors Qian Long and Kang Xi both knew what they liked and spent a long time in Hangzhou. The town suffered heavily under the Taiping Rebellion, most of the temples were burned, which explains why so few of them are left today. Hangzhou was opened to foreign trade in 1895 (Treaty of Shimonoseki), particularly to the Japanese. In the early years of this century a railway line was built first linking the town with Shanghai and later to Ningbo, which facilitated trading to a large extent, since up to then all the goods were transported on the Grand Canal or the river Qian Tang.

After 1949 the town has been singled out as the location of several light-industry plants, and capital construction began on a massive scale. Today the city still appears to have some charm, especially the lake Xi and the islands in it, but also on the far side of the lake, downtown, very interesting buildings and houses may be worth a closer look, and we had some hint of the town's splendid past.

We did not do very much this day. We felt strangely tired from the boat trip, and stayed in our rooms, had a coffee in the cafeteria, and a meal in the restaurant, which is a fairly good one. Close to the hotel is also the Lou Wai Lou restaurant, which is said to have excellent food, including fresh seafood either from the lake in front of its doors or from the sea itself.

In the afternoon we went into town with the bus, and Matz accompanied us to the police station, in order to get his extension. I have already described his case, with the result that he had to leave immediately and get out of the country, but later in Hongkong managed to get another visa and went straight back in. We had our visas though, and only wanted the permission to go to Huang Shan in Anhui province, which was granted without any questions. Matz went back to the hotel to fix his packs and things, and Yennie and I strolled along Yenan Lu, the main street of Hangzhou. As it had become my habit to check out the bookstores first, I had a look around for one, but the Gu Ji Dian (store for old books - for foreigners only) was closed already, but it looked quite promising from the outside, so I decided to wait until the weekend was over and then go and see what they had. On Yenan Lu are also all kinds of other shops, and a strange one was a western-style restaurant, which on the first floor serves hot milk and good cakes and cookies, and on the second floor one could order anything from American tomato soup to typical Chinese dishes like yellow fish. We bought some cakes there, and then tried to find out how to get to Huang Shan or Shao Xing. To Shao Xing organized bus tours are going, but now during the wintertime it took a while to fill the busses and make the trip a profitable one, and we decided we did not want to wait that long, but then eventually took a local train, which does not take more than one hour, as far as I can remember. It was dark when we returned on foot back to the hotel, walking along the lakeshore, hand in hand, while Yennie frequently tried to throw me into the shallow water, just for fun. This woman is full of jokes and laughter all the time, and never have I seen her fa piqi (not for translation) with me or people she loves.

31st January 1982

The morning was spent roaming around the local antique store, where I bought a few small items, and Yennie was marvelling at the Ji Xue Shi, a kind of stone to cut seals in, which is a bit on the expensive side. The shop has a great variety of things big and small, and it is not always that the great things were expensive and the small things cheap. This shop is located near a market place, which appears to be a prominent building in the city center because of its modern design and the materials which were used to construct the roof of the two-storey building.

This morning we also went to the ticket sales office in order to get a ticket for the bus to Huang Shan. The drive would take the whole day, and changing the bus would be necessary on the way.

We left the town and took bus no. 7 to reach the famous Ling Yin Si. We shared the bus with a crowd of people and it became obvious that we had the same aim, because the bus became ever fuller and only at the last stop did the crowd disperse, mingle with other crowds. At the final station in front of the gate of the Ling Yin Si are many stands and small shops selling silk (more expensive than in town) and seals, stones and scrolls, and other kinds of popular craftwork. We passed the gate to the temple's garden and went along with the crowds for a hundred yards or more, but then suddenly we left the path to the left and started climbing up the hill, which was dotted with small caves and Buddhist carvings of the lord. We did that because we were fed up in a way to swim along with these noisy and buzzing people, and also because we were still remembering all the things and places we had seen and visited in Suzhou—a person can only take that much, and it appeared to us that we already had our "fill" of temples and relics for the next few years. But here we were trying to get to see the noted Ling Yin Si, and all of a sudden we felt that this was not really what we were after today, but thought we might as well take it easy and have a stroll through the temple garden and into the countryside. Yet before I will take the reader through the bamboo forests and along the winding paths that lead up those hills I will give a short description of the temple's background. The founder of the temple was a certain Hui li, who arrived from India in the 4th century. The temple was established at around that time, rebuilt in 596, when it was called the "Southern Indian Temple", but its present name dates already from the Tang dynasty. The buildings as can be seen nowadays are all recently built and reconstructed. It had been destroyed during the Taiping rebellion. It is a very large complex of halls and other buildings, with a wall around it. I cannot say more about it because we have not been inside, and only to write what the guidebook says is sometimes not the way oneself would experience the place itself. However, we had left the path of the crowds, and were on our way up one of the surrounding hills, walking and stalking through ferns and thick bamboo. After maybe forty minutes of climbing we finally reached the top of Shang Tian Zhu Mountain, where we sat down and looked over the city and the lake, which was wrapped in mist but still visible. On our way back home we passed through Long Jin Cun, the place where one of China's famous teas is grown. The fields along the path we were walking on was planted with teabushes, and it would not be long that the first harvest would be done in springtime. As we were walking through the fields we thought that it was a good idea to ask in one of the farms for tea, which at any rate would be cheaper to buy here in the country than in the shops of the city. We approached a place that looked like it had some relation with the fields around it and were greeted by an old man who asked what he could do for us. We said we wanted to buy some tea from him, and asked if that was possible. He invited us inside and soon all his relatives were there and asking Yennie and me all sorts of questions, until in the end a young man came to show us his new Japanese stereo cassette recorder, and asked us about the price of it in Hongkong, since he had bought it from a foreigner (or a Hongkong Chinese),

who claimed that he had paid tax for it at the boarder, which may be true, may be not true. Anyway, we were sitting now in this place with a cup of tea before us, invited by this shrewd old man who was the oldest ancestor of the household, which included maybe twelve or fourteen people of all ages, but the thing was that they had no tea for sale. Instead they gave us the tea that they themselves were using (at least a good share of it) and our protests were of no avail. Then we were asked to change some money for them, and as far as I recall we changed thirty WHQ against the same amount of RMB. After the deal we were shown around the house and had to admire a room which was furnished with completely new and selfmade furniture, since a member of the household was going to get married and that would be the dowry³⁹. It is thus in China the custom (in richer areas, where for example such products like tea or silk is produced, which only in recent years has been done again on a partly private basis) that the family of the bride provides the furniture, whereas the family of the man builds or at least supplies the funds for a new home. This practise resulted after the partly privatisation of the production means and the harvest great booms of building activities in the richer villages, with the result that the old parts of the place, which still forms a coherent whole, is seperated from the new village, which upsets the infrastructure and the entire ethos of Chinese town planning. It is just too fast, and people delight in their new liberty and show off their new houses, which average at around 10.000 yuan, while the money for the interior may sum up to cost almost 5.000 yuan, which represents large amounts of money for a Chinese, but bears witness of the fact that the farmers who are happy enough to be born into a place with tea or silk production are far better off than a worker in the city, or maybe even a lower official in the administration. We left the place with two small packets of tea under the arm, after we had made our compliments about the furniture and the house in general, and the grandfather gave us directions about the way back to Hangzhou. It was a very beautiful walk back, and we went by an army garrison which looked much more like a sanatorium with all the green and the flowers near the entrance. The surrounding hills of Hangzhou are truly marvelous, and we always enjoyed walking through the woods and fields, under the high branches of the slender bamboo.

Back in the hotel we went straight to our rooms to wash and prepare for dinner, and I must say that the staff serving in the Hangzhou Hotel restaurant are very nice and do their job as should be done. We had Huang Yu, which was prepared in the proper way, and tasted delicious. After our dinner we took the bus back into town, where we had an appointment with Yennie's cousin, the one who had accompanied us on the boat, and who has some relations to the local theatre and other stage performers. I had mentioned to him that I liked Ping Tan very much, and he then had promised to arrange for us to see a performance of it, which happened to be tonight. We were led into the theatre where we were the only foreigners and also maybe the only young persons to watch the Xing Qin Guo Qi, a piece from the Song dynasty, which was performed by an old man with his San Xian (an instrument with three strings), and a younger woman playing the Pi Pa, an instrument of Mongolian origins, and which has a sound resembling that of the lute. Together these two persons were half singing half recounting the story, of which I did not understand a word, as I must admit. Only when it came to the imitation of the Shandong dialect did I manage to pick up a few sentences, but they added nothing to the comprehension of the piece itself, but Yennie later told me the framework of the story, and so I could fit in the parts that I had understood. Most of it was sung in the Suzhou accent (or Hangzhou dialect; in any case a dialect I did not understand much of), but some places other voices of persons from different parts of the country had to be imitated, since the story consisted of numerous characters, which were all played by the two persons on the stage, sometimes singing, sometimes reciting the events of the play. At one time the woman was replaced by a young man, but basically it was the old man who was the main figure on the stage and who did most of the playing and recounting. After the performance had finished we learnt that the play itself was not yet at an end, but rather was something like a serial,

which would continue for some time, and we had had only seen a fraction of it, which nevertheless had been a proper performance of Ping Tan, exactly what I had wanted to see. It had not been as catching in a way as the piece I had listened to in Yennie's uncle's house in Suzhou one day, but it had quenched my curiosity regarding to what the whole thing was all about, what instruments were used and how it was performed.

I think we managed to get the last bus home to our hotel, because it was very late already, and the streets were deserted, except for the few people that had been attending the same performance as we, otherwise we would have to walk an hour back to the hotel, and we felt we had done enough walking for today; we were lucky, though, and with a sprint I reached the last bus and held the door open for Yennie, who was just as tired as I was. Tomorrow would be our last day in Hangzhou, and the day after that we were to take the bus to Huang Shan.

1st February 1982

The Gu Ji Dian was open today and I took my time this morning to go through the books and stitchbound copies of old works. On the right hand side just opposite the entrance is the shelf with latest publications about history, calligraphy, philosophy (still disappointing in many aspects), and works of philosophical interest. Further to the left books become older and more expensive, including very interesting works such as the Complete works of Qu Yuan for 15 yuan, or rubbings from stone tablets for two hundred yuan. I bought a dictionary and the catalogue for the Si Bu Bei Yao editions, an edition of classical works of literature, philosophy, complete works, and canonical works, all listed and summed up in their contents.

In the afternoon we took a boat across the lake. Our first island to visit there was the "Three Pools of mirroring the Moon Island", a very strange structure resembling an atoll, but with the difference that there was not only one lagoon enclosed by some sort of artificial reef, but four, with paths joining in the middle, where there is also a very pleasant teahouse that serves a variety of Long Jing Cha, as well as a beverage which consists of ground lotus roots (*a kind of starch*), added with sugar, which is called Ou Fen.

The next boat, a smaller one, took us to Mid-Lake Pavillon, where we spent some time strolling around. Coming from there we took the last step to reach the biggest island in the lake, called Gu Shan, or the lonely hill, which is linked to the land by the Bai Ju Yi dyke to the east and a bridge leading into the direction of the hotel, which is opposite the town proper. This small island is a very interesting place to see, since it is the site of a number of important and illustrious institutions and societies, which used to have their quarters here, or still have. An account of its history of settlements may be useful here. It starts with the fact that the emperor Qian Long had a palace built here in the 18th century, of which nothing, however, remains today, though the building of the library - of which soon will be said a word or two - still exists. What does no longer exist is the temple called the Sheng Yin Si, and the living quarters themselves have vanished, too. Regarding the library, called the Wen Lan Ge library, this was one of six imperial libraries set up by Qian Long to house the vast collection of books comprised under the edition of the Si Ku Quan Shu, from which the Si Bu Bei Yao was to emerge eventually. One might call it the Great Encyclopedia of the Chinese people. The library is forbidden to foreigners, for some good reasons, as will be clear to the reader when I have finished with the historical account of the island's buildings. To the left of the temple was a stone stupa, with the sixteen Luo Han reproductions, a work of a famous 10th century priest. Today we could not see a glimpse of it, though there is another stupa on top of the hill, in a part that belongs or belonged to the seal engraver's society. When the Taiping reached the

island the palace was destroyed and the library suffered great losses, the shelves being burnt and the books vanished and became a favourite article to sell to the foreigners, who by that time had slowly started to infiltrate the country. A local scholar, however, tried to restore the library, stocked it with copies of the old works, and it seems today to be still in use and housing a collection held precious enough to prohibit entrance to strangers and especially foreigners. There are not many official buildings of cultural importance or of public or semi-public character that have the sign "Forbidden for Foreigners" in front of their doors, and as a result (and also because I am a bookworm maybe) I was very much attracted to the building, which in a fading yellow facade lies in a nice little court and looks more like a colonial style villa to me than a building designed under Qian Long in the 18th century. At the very western tip of the island, where the bridge begins, stands a monument set up in recent years to the memory of Qiu Jin, a celebrated heroine who played an important role during and after the 1911 revolution, but who finally fell into the clutches of the officials and died without having betrayed her fellow-revolutionaries. Going back to that library, I just read that it may indeed be the house of a colonial background, because a European house, built on the ruins of the old palace, and which was to be the residence of Prince Henry of Prussia, fits the description and the image I have from the building exactly. Now, going towards the other side of the former palace, we entered the Zhe Jiang Provincial Museum, which is a strange complex of scattered buildings old and new, and which features natural history as well as human history from its early stages until revolutionary times. A model of the battle against the sea (you remember the story of the brave bowmen shooting at the crests of the oncoming waves) can be seen, elaborately carved in limestone. A small showcase with prints of seals gave me for the first time an impression of its characteristics and what it meant for its creator in terms of expressing himself and his world. These seals are still used today and form a habit in the daily life of the educated Chinese, who use them as we would use our calling card, or signature. I just learned from another reference work here to my disposal that the more modern western-style building forbidden to foreigners houses not the part of the Si Ku Quan Shu but rather the Zhe Jiang Provincial Library, and that the imperial edition is housed in a building behind the museum, that we might have seen, but that I am at present unable to recall. The Seal Engraver's Society had chosen one of the most beautiful of all places on this small island, and it is still a lively place today, with two pavilions selling seals (some of them very cheap, others at a very high price - obviously originals) in the midst of a well kept garden, with the already mentioned small but old pagoda on top of a circular stone plateau. In one of the houses in this garden, which by the way is now called after the father of the Chinese republic, Dr. Sun Yat Sen or Sun Zhong Shan, as he is called in his country, was an exhibition of scrolls of calligraphy by a famous artist called Wu Chang Shuo. Directly on the waterfront a bit further along the shore of the island stands a building in the traditional Chinese design, with dark wooden walls and columns carved with ornaments, some painted red, which is a very catching contrast to the darkness of the wood and the delicacy of the carved windows. When we were once coming back from the city on foot we had to pass here, and it made a great impression on us to see the yellow light come forth from the windows, together with the very elegant forms of the building itself standing still in the cool evening breeze.

We returned early back to our hotel to fix our stuff, do some washing, and go upstairs to have a meal in the restaurant, which was very satisfactory, and always would produce a hearty meal for five or six yuan. Back in my room I did my writing and Yennie joined me in the conversation with a French student of Chinese literature, who complained about the authorities who would not let him do the research he wanted to do regarding one of China's greatest writers of recent times, Lu Xun. When we told him that we had lived with Chinese families for a week he indicated that it must have been made possible only through a bribe presented

to the person in charge of the affair. He took a rather grim and sceptical view at way the administration is working in China, and maybe he has his points to strengthen his scepticism. He like all the other students in China suffered from the fact that contact between foreigners and Chinese is reduced to a very minimum, with the result that the foreign students in Peking complain about the kind of ghetto they live in, and when this Frenchman heard that we had had almost a normal relationship with the people by living in their house and eating their food he naturally thought that this could not have been brought about without the application of pressure on some authorities or by means of a bribe. Anyway, I hope that this experience will not be the only of its kind to the foreign traveller, and that the people studying in China will have a better stand one day. At present, Taiwan is the better choice.

2nd February 1982

We got up at five this morning, finished packing and checked out of the hotel, where a taxi was waiting to take us to the bus station. The bus for Huang Shan left at 6.30, and it was full up to the last place. As usual we had problems with our packs, which were not that big after all (I had advised Yennie to leave her very big and heavy pack in Hongkong with a cousin), but the driver is simply too lazy to climb on top of the roof and place the luggage there, as Yennie pointed out. I am inclined to agree on this point, because I have seen a lot of busdrivers in Afghanistan for example who were climbing up the ladder at the rear like monkeys to receive the packs and parcels of the passengers, indeed this procedure added a touch of excitement to one's departure with all the shuffling and handing up the goods to the driver or his helper, while at the same time somebody would approach you with a wide smile or a stern shrewd face trying to sell some fruits for the long road, some dates or whatever, and one would buy the fresh fruits, exchange greetings and board the bus with a sense of lightness and expectation. Here it was nothing of the sort - nobody tried to sell us anything, no smile would greet us or see us off, and instead we had to put up with a stupid busdriver who didn't give a damn about anybody's belongings, but got on the bus five minutes before the start, cursing the people who had placed their luggage in such a way that made it almost impossible for him to climb into his seat. Maybe he expected us to do all the work, put the packs and sacks on the roof, look for a rope to tie and secure the goods, then come back down and patiently wait for the great helmsman comrade driver to get the thing into gear. We were off and out of town soon after, and drove straight on until ten o'clock, when we had a short brake. People were feeling not too well on the bus, but Yennie and I, being used to the strain, were doing fine. We changed bus at 1.20pm, and in this bus I had no seat at all, but was trying to sit on our luggage in the center between the seats, as far up front as possible so that I would not be able to see the people vomit out of the windows, on their clothes or simply between their feet. It was some sight to behold, this sad and humiliating agony that overcame most of the passengers when we entered the hills and then the mountains on the other side of the boarder, in Anhui. And yet, when we stopped at three o'clock in the afternoon for another brake everybody got off the bus to get something to eat and drink, which was swallowed in a hurry, just to be gulped up and spit out as soon as the bus continued on his way high above in the hills with its winding roads. I finally managed to get a seat and when we arrived at the gate of Huang Shan it was about 4.50pm. We had passed a very ragged and rough range of hills and crossed some passes which gave us a splendid view of the valleys deep beneath us. For an hour or so we also had been driving high above a river, which had ground his bed into the brown rocky hills and succeeded in pushing through the mountains with the force of his light-brown waters. The valley was very steep and sometimes a junk would appear or an old boat, long and dark, with a man bent

the only long paddle at the rear, which is both used for pushing the boat forward as well as giving it its direction. The boats and the boatmen were dwarfed by the steep 200m high banks of the river, which had almost no vegetation on them because they were just too steep for a bigger plant to get a good grip, and the scene looked very solemn and I felt a deep urge to get off the bus and continue my way on a boat like that one beneath me, with a dark figure moving in endless circles his paddle, pursuing his course with whatever strength god may have given him. The scene reminded me strongly of the themes in Daoist paintings, where nature is always represented as an overwhelming experience and a force that cannot be tamed, but demands submission and a humble attitude.

We were there. We had reached the Yellow Mountains, and were now at the foot of a mountain range that had been celebrated and painted and written about in many a poem. There is a hotel a short distance underneath the bus station, on the other side of a mountain torrent. Just behind the station, which is more like a parking lot actually than a real hall with a ticket counter and so forth, stands the Ce Guang Ge, a building in the traditional style with a small shop on the left in the basement, but it was obvious from the building's style that it used to be a more ceremonial one in former times. The Hot Springs are just beside the Huang Shan Hotel, in a building that is not the prettiest one, neither from the inside nor from the outside. But first things first. We got a room on the second floor for twelve yuan, after a long argument with the receptionist, who wanted to put us on the top floor for twenty yuan a night, no heating. It was a lousy room, but not the lousiest one we had been in, so we got settled, spread our things and went around the place, checked out the Hot Springs and killed time until dinner. It was hardly worth it, because for the seven yuan we paid a meagre meal was served which did not taste very much like anything; Yennie was disappointed, and I was taken aback by the high prices and the style the whole place was run.

A word about the hot springs must be said. They cost one yuan entrance (five mao for Chinese) and are around 40 degrees, which is hardly enough to feel comfortable. Everybody has his own room with a bathtub, and not a big pool where the men would gather and one for the women. To prevent me from feeling cold I constantly kept the water running, no matter if it overflowed or not; as Yennie later told me, she did the same. The equipment in the rooms is painted all in white, and one has the feeling of lying in the bathroom of a hospital, that had been built fifty years ago. It is only for the rustic character, as so much else in China, which lacks the charm of the past and the technical sophistication of the present. It is right down to merely being functional, and in the case of a hot spring making it functional is excluding the funny side of taking a bath.

This evening we spent studying the map of the mountain range, of which I will give a short basic description: Huang Shan is the collective name for a granite mountain range in the province of Anhui, around 400 km southwest of Shanghai. It comprises 72 peaks, with the highest being the Lian Hua Feng and the Guang Ming Ding, with about 1850 m. It covers an area of 150 square miles, and the whole range is roughly shaped like an oval. It was given its name over one thousand years ago, when the Tang emperor Tian Bao praised its unique beauty, along with Li Bai and many other poets and educated or gifted travellers. I must say from the beginning that I have never seen a place more beautiful and more typical Chinese than these lofty mountains, and I will be ever thankful to Yennie that she had proposed the idea of coming here. I will not be able to describe its beauty in English, but I will give it a try, and I will stop when I feel that I destroy the images that linger on in my mind both for the reader and for myself.

We left the window open that night and the fresh mountain air filled the room during the night with all its fragrance.

3rd February 1982

We had a breakfast not worth mentioning and then fixed up our packs in order to leave them here in the hotel, and they were stowed away in the room behind the reception. Some Chinese from Hongkong were also preparing to go up the mountains, and we talked to them for a while. We learned that we had been lucky reaching Huang Shan in one day, since they had tried to do the same but had ended up in She Xian, the place where Yennie and I had switched the bus, with no possibility to go any further that day, which meant they had to stay overnight in this place, which by the way is famous for its rich merchants (mainly tea), and for the Liu An Cha, a good quality tea.⁴⁰

At around 11.30 am we started on our way, which led us first around in front of the hot springs and then went to the right and continued to climb up on the right side of the riverbed, which held very little water. It had been a little foggy and hazy this morning, but soon after noontime it started to drizzle. We were doing alright so far, and when we passed the temple that lies a short distance behind the hot springs we paid an entrance fee to be able to pass here and proceed our way up the way (if I am not mistaken then THIS temple is called the Ce Guang Ge - and not the one I had called so earlier, further down near the busstop). We had been warned by Yennie's cousin, the cook, that Huang Shan was very hard to climb and the paths were steep and narrow, and he concluded that the mountains here would be much harder to climb than Mount E Mei, but I guess he had never been to Sichuan, and only wanted to frighten us. The way we walked on here was indeed narrow and steep at times, but never as steep that you could put your nose to the rock, and the stairs were all laid out in regular intervals, consisting only of rock, and not the mud and the roots we were used to from Mount E Mei. It would have been a pleasant climb if the weather would have been a little bit better. Yet - the further up we climbed the more wind came up and drove the rain right into our faces, and sometimes even made it difficult to stand up straight. The scene we had underneath and overneath us was a deep valley with the hard shoulders of black rock on the side opposite from us, a huge glistening mass that looked so smooth with the rain falling or being driven against it as if it had been polished. To our feet we could see curtains of haze dancing in the valley against a background of a deep green by the many trees that stood at its entrance. We came to places where we had to hold on with our hands too, otherwise the wind would have driven us over the edge, which was not secured with a chain or such thing. After a while we took a rest in one of the pavilions along the way, which gave us some protection from the violent gushes of wind, and I tried to make some pictures of this massive shoulder of rock hanging overneath us on the other side. We had a short debate about whether we should go on or not, but finally decided to do so because we thought it more exciting and also because the place we would have returned to (Huang Shan Hotel) held nothing of interest for us, unlike the places we had stayed on Mount E Mei. We were rather wet by now, not to the skin (that was a little later) though, and followed the path and the evenly hewn steps further up, until we finally came to a place which would have commanded a beautiful view all over the valley, if not for the clouds and the rain. A house stood here, and we knocked to get something warming us up into our stomachs. The old man serving us (we were the only one) told us he had been a former monk in the Ce Guang Ge, I believe, but as everybody else had to resign and enter the world again, which eventually had given him the job he was doing right now, as a cook and a waiter in a place that must be crawling with tourists during the summer. After this break we had reached the upper exit of the glen, and the way led us through a number of huge rocks over a low pass, from where we descended a short distance to climb up on the other side. In the course of the climb we passed two or three points marked as viewpoints, but they were so exposed to the wind that we did not dare to climb up to them, and when I did so once all I could see was

that we were still in the clouds, and no glimpse of the landscape beneath us, which is so famed and has been described in all styles of languages, poems and prose. But what use could those words have here in a world of whirling fog and gusts of wind and rain, that made it extremely difficult (we were the only ones going up that day) to pick one's way up to the top. The mountain is not that high, however, and we merely had to climb one thousand meters from 630 to 1640 meters, a way that could be done in three to four hours. When we finally saw the Ying Ke Song, the old pinetree greeting the visitor, it was around 4.30 pm. This pine-tree, one of the things that Huang Shan is famous for, is over a thousand years old and stands on a small platform just beneath the Yu Ping Lou, our hotel for the night. We had reached our destiny for today, and had experienced a day in the Yellow Mountains that gave rise to doubts concerning the weather on the next day. What we took with us, however, was the image of this long valley with the hard and smooth rock overhanging the deep ravine planted with bamboo and other trees, all in colours made so decent and soft by the curtains of rain that we had felt a kind of silent awe towards the strange majesty of the place.

We booked a room for ten yuan in the Yu Ping Lou, which lies roughly to the north of the Huang Shan Hotel, eight kilometers, to be exact. Distances are short here, and it is no trouble at all to climb three or four or even more peaks in one day, by merely following the well made paths. The Yu Ping Lou is a rather modern building, two storeys high, with various side buildings, and it is situated in a surrounding that is nothing short of spectacular. It is built on a small plateau that falls off at the edges maybe five hundred meters on all sides, excluding the side we had come up, and consequently one has a splendid view from up here, weather permitting, of course. Today was not the day to idle around outside, so I went into the kitchen, asked for some coals from the stove fire to heat us up (there is no heating on all Huang Shan), and while we dried ourselves and changed clothes we waited for the evening meal. A few Hongkong Chinese were there, too (as I said to the beginning of the diary - they are everywhere) and we had some exchange of experiences in the course of the evening. The meal was alright, and shortly afterwards we retired to our room to get an early start tomorrow.

4th February 1982

We woke up at eight o'clock, dressed and looked out of the window. It was a blue sky, so far we could see, and that was all we knew when we came out of the hotel and went to the edge to look what might be lying beneath us. And Lo and Behold, we had the most beautiful sea of clouds that one could imagine, at just the right height to allow a few distant peaks to poke through the white cover and give us a new impression of the dimensions of space, so vast and so far above the clouds, we had a view of maybe thirty miles around us, the white and silently drifting clouds beneath us, and the black and brown masses of rocks protruding through at random, a perfect setting for one of the Chinese paintings, which draw their character and spirituality indeed from places like Huang Shan, the clouds, the rocks, the wiry pinetrees and the steep cliffs. The beauty of the scene was just too exciting and I rushed back into our room to get the camera.

After breakfast we were on our way, looking forward to a very pleasant day in the mountains, while climbing up and down, but always above the clouds. The first peak we climbed was the highest in this mountain range, the Lian Hua Feng, being 1873m above sea level, and maybe three-to four hundred meters above the clouds. From up here all the other peaks seemed to be so clearly visible and close, we thought we could grab them. It was a spectacular view all around, and especially seeing the hotel we had left some time ago lying between the rocks on this small plateau reminded me of an eagle's horst high above and with no access except by air. It was just perfectly imbedded among the boulders and the low wall of rock in the back of the building, protecting it from the violent drifts of wind we have had the day before.

We climbed down from the Lian Hua Feng and discovered that we were not the only people on the way to the Bei Hai Bing Guan today. We soon lost them again, however, and proceeded on our way, first down again and then in a long slope up to the Guang Ming Ding, a peak with a weather station on top of it, or rather a plateau, if you want, not really rocky, but covered with grass and low trees. Two paths lead from here to the Northern Sea Hotel (the Chinese name is the one mentioned above), and the one passing by the Fei Lai Shi (the mountain with a standing stone—a natural one on top of it) is by far the more interesting, leading directly towards and into the Northern Sea of Peaks. We reached the Fei Lai Shi half an hour later and climbed up to it, sitting back against the stone and having our lunch there. What we could see in front of us was an ever changing flow of white clouds, drifting from east to west, sometimes revealing a mountain peak in the distance, sometimes covering the one right in front of us. Never had I seen such beauty of a mountain in my life, and Yennie was very impressed and delighted, too. Below our feet was an abyss of perhaps 200 meters, and just beyond at a distance of a few hundred meters (if distances in a painting can be measured by meters) was a peak standing out of the clouds, that was all the time washed over and stood in the middle of a constant flow of the yielding white masses, that would part when reaching the rock, and toss down to the other side of it exactly like an enormous but miraculously soundless waterfall. Everything was very silent around us, and it was wonderful, really a thing to meditate upon that such swift movement could be performed in a vacuum of silence. We finished our meal and afterwards just sat there for a long time, watching the drift encircle the peaks, running against them like waves of white spray, or washing over them, hiding them momentarily from our view.

We descended from the "Stone that flew in from afar", as is his name directly translated, and walked on on a level terrain, that was slowly bringing us down and into the clouds, an experience that cannot be described. Everything changed, the temperature, vision and atmosphere of the place. It became even quieter than before, not really an oppressive silence, but rather a mysterious one; we could see maybe fifteen meters ahead, and the only thing we could do was follow the stairs that led us down and into this country of elves and fairies. On a spot that we would least of all expected a person suddenly a group of young people from Hongkong emerged out of the fog, sitting beside the path which here gave way to another viewpoint under old and thick trees with branches high up in the air. There was nothing to see from here, of course, with conditions being what they were, and we passed them and exchanged greetings after a short stop. The path was almost level now, and after another forty minutes we reached the buildings of a branch of the Bei Hai Bin Guan, which was situated on a loud and wild torrent, that we had heard long before we caught sight of it. We could hardly distinguish the features of the building on the other side of the stream, but I asked Yennie to wait for me and crossed the bridge that led to the entrance of the building, where a dog came to greet me. After a while I spotted an old woman coming towards me and she gave me directions about how to get to the main hotel complex, that was still half an hour away. On Yennie's side of the river, to which I returned after having thanked the lady for her help we saw a dozen barracks with washing facilities outside (the water inside the basins was frozen), which made us believe that the place must be a very popular one indeed during the summer. Once again I thought how lucky we were of having chosen this time of the year, and not the tourist season, when everybody is on his way and it is hard to get beds in the dormitory or a cheap trainticket.

Upon reaching the Bei Hai Bin Guan we checked in and were given a room for reasonable ten yuan, but not after having waited for some time in the hall, since nobody was around to receive us when we entered the hall with the reception; we thus waited a while, watching the young people from Hongkong playing table tennis. We had arrived very early today, it was only three o'clock. After five the weather suddenly changed again and the clouds became dispersed, giving way to a clear sky, which made me believe that we would have a beautiful sunset tonight. A short dis=

tance away from the hotel was a peak with a television station on top of it, and to this place I climbed up alone (Yennie was meanwhile having her dinner), went through the buildings to the other side, the direction facing west, and sat down on the stairs which led down into the garden to wait for the sunset. I stayed for what must have been more than one hour, taking pictures with Yennie's camera (if I would have only taken my own), and contemplating the brilliant sky behind the dark peaks and above the sea of clouds, that was changing colour now in a rapid succession at its edge, leaving the sun half hidden behind rays of red, yellow, purple and pink. It was fascinating to sit here and watch this natural spectacle of colours and forms, becoming more radiant with every minute.

When I reached the hotel again it was well after dinner time and there were only a few people left, including a Yennie that was not all that pleased with my long absence. I told her what I had seen and she seemed to become ever more displeased with leaving her alone down here, so I changed subject and excused myself, which did not do much to heighten her spirits, though. I had my meal, which was half cold by now, and we then went back to our room for some tea and discussing plans about tomorrow's proceedings. We wanted to go down again and reach the Huang Shan Bin Guan, which could be easily reached by a road that started at the Yun He Si, a former temple that is now also converted into a place to accommodate tourists, I believe. We thought we might be able to make it down to the Motel just in time to reach the bus in the early afternoon, that would bring us to She Xian, where we would stay the night before going back to Hangzhou. All these schemes about buses and right connections did not work out, however, since the weather changed once again overnight, and we were presented with a third way that Huang Shan may present himself to the fortunate traveller.

The electricity was for some reason cut off this evening, and when we left the dining room we were hardly able to find our room, where we lit a candle, made our plans for the next day and then went to bed.

5th February 1982

Everything was white, completely white. I had wondered when it would finally happen, but I had not expected such a radical change. The snow outside was already two inches high, and it was still falling, from a very grey and gloomy sky, the right clouds to hold for a week, burying the whole place beneath them and making communications and connections brake down, especially here, at the end of the world. When we later were on our way down to the Yun He Si, from where the new road starts, we had such magnificent images along the way, with old pinetrees heavy under the load of snow pressing down its branches, or the stream flowing down the valley and that our path was following for a while, slippery now and more dangerous, with white-capped boulders in the middle of the torrent, while bamboo branches with their silver coats were hanging low over the water, playing with the crests of the waves. Everybody knows what winter is like, and yet we had almost forgotten it, and I had even thought I might catch a glimpse of springtime in Hangzhou the week before. But here we were right in the middle of it, and I must admit it felt great kicking the snow on the stairs that led down to the temple, and Yennie ever playful trying to throw some icicle down my way to irritate me. We had no accidents, though, but came down save all the way.

From the Yun He Si on we marched along the new road that in the summertime is a major busroute for tourists, but now lay deserted and quiet under our feet, covered with three or more inches of snow. As we were to find out it was not only snowing in the upper regions of the mountains, but all over the place, and it was raining a cold hard rain in Shanghai, as we were told later. We followed the road all the way to the Huang Shan Hotel, where our first observation was that there was no bus at the busstop (he would have been due to leave at

around 13.20 pm), and that the group of Hongkong Chinese were also waiting for the smaller bus that they had rented, but neither of them showed up. We did not want to stay in the hotel overnight, but instead decided to go down to the village that lies beyond the Huang Shan Gate, and where we reckoned a local bus could pick us up early the next morning. We did not know whether there was a hotel or not, but we thought there must be one (there is indeed), that the snow would be lower down there (it was), and that consequently any bus would only be able to go as far as that village, on account of the poor equipment they have and the low determination to run risks just to pick up a bunch of foreigners on top of a mountain. All these thoughts were correct, as we found out later, but what obviously was not correct was the fact that we were to take our luggage and leave for a place where the authorities for some reasons of their own would not want to let us go. We had not yet paid our bill from the last stay, and we did that now, while at the same time picking up our packs from the storage room. After we had paid we wanted to get going, and were merely waiting for the snow to stop falling, which was at around 4.30 pm. By that time we were approached by various persons young and old, who urged us to stay here in this hotel, since the village below was bu kai feng, which means off limits—a place where a foreigner is not supposed and not allowed to go. The manager of the hotel, a sly fox, told us to stay, the local official representing the police told us to stay, and the young man who had received our payment wanted us to take back the receipt, so that he could write a new one, including the night we without doubt would have to stay on. We were strongly in favour of leaving, because we could not see a chance of getting back to Shanghai as we had promised to (we were one day late already), and we did not want to upset the plans that Yennie's youngest uncle had arranged for us and that included some very interesting places. While we argued with those holding themselves responsible for our security, we made some strong points by mentioning the poor quality of the food, the unfriendly service in the whole house, and the high costs for the room. We were then begged to come into the office of the manager, where we had tea and made clear our opposite points of view. They were brought down to the proposal to stay in their hotel here without having to pay for the room or the food, which we accepted, because we could not do very much against it, and who knows what would have happened, if we really had said "no"; picked up our packs and walked out that door. It is possible that we would have been asked to leave the country immediately, since we were not corresponding with the conditions a foreigner has to agree to when he enters the People's Republic, that is, stay in sight of the authorities, and don't try to go to places that you are not allowed to stay.

We had the same room as last time, and the police officer came soon after to check our passports and travel permissions. I thought; "This is it, he is asking us to get the next plane out." But he returned after some time with all the documents, and our travel permissions had a piece of paper more in them, allowing us to stay in Tun Xi overnight, where he assured us the bus we would catch the next morning was going. He also had phoned to the village below to make sure that at present there was no bus, but only had done so after we had convinced him to do so, with the risk on his side that if indeed there was a bus we would be out and away the next minute, but fortunately for him (and maybe for us, too), no bus was to be expected until the next morning, whereupon he suggested to bring us down the way into the village to see us off. He wanted to make sure that we, whom he considered as makers of mischief, would really leave with that bus, and in any case, if it would continue to snow and make transportation impossible, he would have to convince us that our place was in this hotel, and not in the village. When we went to the dining hall this evening we saw the girls whispering to each other, and the cook came out of the kitchen to have a look at those strange guests, that dared to complain about his doings. We must have looked very fearsome this particular evening, because he produced a great meal for us with soup and fish,

vegetables and meat, and the only thing it had in common with the meal we had had in the same place two nights before was the rice and the bottle of Qingdao beer that went with it.

Our stubborn behaviour had earned us at least the advantage of a good dinner, and of course the free stay overnight.

Some reflections about this incident are to be brought to the attention of the reader. First, the whole traffic of tourists who visit China on an individual basis, is said to be part of an experiment lasting one year, maybe more. It is in the nature of an experiment that the outcome is not always certain, which means for the Chinese authorities in this specific case: are we prepared to let people come in on their own, in masses, and how do the accommodations suite them; what impact has this infiltration on the character of our people (we do not want contact between the visitors and the people that could endanger the social fabric of our -totalitarian- society), and how can we avoid that a foreigner may make discoveries embarrassing for the state (those are numerous indeed - concentration camps, death penalty, famine and riots, the discrepancy between the class of bureaucrats and the still impoverished countryside etc.)? In our case, we had pushed to the very limit of the sanctioned degree of tolerance towards a foreigner, and the next step would probably ^{have} been a very unpleasant one, which we had the nerve to avoid. I have no intention to put our behaviour in a good light; we merely showed no respect to the local authorities (merely is a good word - it would have broken the neck of an ordinary Chinese citizen), and wished to follow our own way, which happened to interfere with the directions these people had been given by the government. We are not ordinary tourists in this country, however, but have a deep concern about its people and circumstances (Yennie's concern stems much more from the heart, since these are of her own kin and blood - mine results more from the mind, the feeling of belonging spiritually and by virtue to this race), but when I imagine a stream of international tourists of the African safari brand for instance coming into the country and visiting Huang Shan, then I must state that those people here in charge are not fit for the job (the sly manager because his character is out of place, the police officer because his shoes are a few numbers too small to cope with the big-time tourist, and in general because nobody speaks English), and when I visualize a meeting (Chinese always have meetings - kai hui) of hotel managers discussing their problems and experiences they have had in dealing with the foreign individual tourist I am afraid our manager here would have to say a few words about some stubborn young people who wanted to do what they wanted to do, which is a thing unheard of in the China of the past thirty years.

I do not want to say any more about this strange event, which had ended in both parts yielding to the realities we had to put up with, and which forced us into this compromise. These realities are not flexible when it comes down to having dealing with a mere Chinese subject (if he is not from the class of officials or a cadre), and are eventually able to crush and destroy the individual (but we Germans have a long standing and unique - almost unique - tradition in state control, I don't have to remind my parents, for example).

Our policeman in charge here said he would come and pick us up the next morning at half past six (normally the bus leaves from the village at six o'clock, one of the reasons why we wanted to get down there this evening), so we decided to go to bed early, after Yennie had practised her flute and I had written my diary, including the incident this afternoon.

The mountains we had come to see had revealed themselves to us in all their beauty: the first day we had had rain and wind whipping through the trees and onto the rock; the second day we saw the most majestic and magnificent Chinese painting I ever walked through, with peaks hidden in the clouds, while some of them would dare to brake through the soft embracing cover, standing still and motionless in all the turmoil of soundlessly rushing clouds, while in the afternoon we actually entered the clouds and found the dimension of space we had

experienced high above them completely reversed into the opposite, a tightness and mysterious silence that had nothing to do with the etherical stillness that prevailed among the peaks. The third day finally, today, we had our first (and only) genuine winter experience, the snowcovered bamboo bowing to their chilly load, while everything was painted white and making harsh forms soft, and petrifying things in motion. My words are clearly inadequate to describe all that we have seen and felt around us, and so I will confine the reader to the pictures (which in themselves are only one-dimensional images, but at least provoke a streak of the visual impact we were rendered to while climbing along the steep cliffs and looking down from Lian Hua Feng, for example) at the end of these notices.

6th February 1982

We were doing fine this morning. We got up in time, accompanied by the police-guide-official made it down to the village, where we had to wait approximately two hours until the bus came, which wasn't the right one, but the right one finally arrived. It had ceased to snow during the night, and here in Tan Kou there was just enough snow on the streets to provide sufficient ground for the children to try their sledges, which were made out of bamboo, with the main beams slightly curled like a turkish slipper to make them slide easier. There were all in all maybe fifteen kids between three and ten years of age, and they had a lot of fun riding those sledges right in front of the bus station. Tan Kou itself is a rather poor place, with narrow streets and wooden houses, only a few more important ones are built from stone. A hotel was there, as we had thought, and also a restaurant and a store, both of a low quality. It did not matter to us, however, since we were to leave this place that had nothing in stock except maybe if I would have been allowed to make enquiries about anthropological or sociological aspects of community life, but that is for the present out of the question. The bus brought us to Tun Xi, a former trading town which shares a lot of features commonly with She Xian, where we to the surprise of everybody in the hotel demanded a room, which was given to us for twelve yuan, a very high price considering the place and the Chinese monthly income. The hotel is very conveniently located just opposite the bus station, and we already had purchased our ticket for tomorrow's bus to Shanghai, through the back door, as I must admit (zou hou men), since we were upon leaving the bus that had brought us to Tun Xi instantly asked where we were going, and then given the proper tickets while led into the ticket office itself, from the back, that means from the court where the busses would start and stop.

Once in our room we observed a piece of paper attached to the wall that said that this particular room was supposed to be in the price class of three yuan per person, whereas we paid exactly double the price, which from the Chinese point of view is only fair, because we earn double as much money as they do (in fact we earn about twenty times as much or more, but following this calculation we would have never been able to pay the hotel prices - everybody knows that, since it is a silly reckoning, and thus the Chinese hold the view that double the price for foreigners is what they can do and what they have to do), and there is no arguing about it, because when I asked the man who brought a little stove and a basket of coals for us about it, he merely shrugged his shoulders and said that the paper is out of date and had been forgotten to take off the wall. We did not take it off the wall, either, because it was not out of time at all, but only was concerned about the Chinese guest, while in places like this special rules are applied to the foreign visitor.

In the evening we were strolling around town, which is for the most part a non-technical or industrialized one, which means that one can still find the ancient

crafts like basket makers,cellarman(cooper),weavers and makers of teakettles,all with their doors wide open to the street and to the eventual customer.I liked to walk around the place with nobody bothering us,and all we got was some strange glance from a small boy or an old lady,while the other people were curious but well behaved.

We had dinner in a two-storey restaurant tonight,and the service was friendly and warm.Back in the hotel we dried the rest of our wet clothes(they were still damp from yesterday's snowfall),and then went to bed.

7th February 1982

The bus was leaving at six thirty,and the whole journey lasted 12 1/2 hours, a fair stretch of time,I must say.The ride took us through a range of hills with snow on their tops,but gradually the country became more even,and in the afternoon we drove along the Tai Hu for some time,and one of the canals, if not the Grand Canal itself.We reached Shanghai on the eve of dusk,and when the bus finally came to a halt we were all quite exhausted.We went to the taxi station,where we were waiting in the rain for a good while to get one, but we were not the only people that evening,and the ratio between inhabitants and a car or a taxi is still very high,counting over eleven million inhabitants and only two or threehundred real taxis(excluding the threewheeled hard boiled green and white eggs that drive around on the streets,called

We drove back to the Jin Jiang Hotel,where we managed to get beds in the same dorms,and had a decent meal in the restaurant.After some tea and the message to get into touch with our benefactor,Yennie's youngest uncle,and furthermore another invitation to have dinner with aunt and uncle no.two,we finally managed to get settled(Yennie had been out to see her relatives who live on Huai Hai Lu),letting our bodies have their way with us,which meant sleep.

8th February 1982

The whole day we stayed in around the hotel,still feeling very exhausted from all the climbing and the long ride on the bus yesterday.At noon we left the room to take a stroll around the town near Chengdu Road,bought a few things like cakes and cookies for tea,then returned to spend the rest of the afternoon indoors,reading and writing,talking to other travellers and washing clothes and ourselves.In the Evening we found ourselves back at the table of aunt and uncle no. 2(they are the ones that live on Huai Hai Lu),and talked about the trip and the beauty of Huang Shan,while Yennie's uncle was serving his wife and us with a good number of dishes.We had taken our camera along with us to make some pictures of them,which we did after having finished the meal.We were informed that Yennie's youngest uncle was waiting for us the next day to talk things over with him,regarding the various visits he had arranged for us.

There was not much more in stock for us today,so we thanked our friendly hosts and said goodbye to them,after which we went back to the Jin Jiang Fan Dian.We had decided to stay here as long as we would be in Shanghai for the sake of convenience both for us and for Yennie's relatives,who of course had made the proposal of moving in with them again.It was not as easy as the first time ,however,since in the apartment I had been staying an old acquaintance of the family was staying(she was over 80 years old,sick and was preparing to die,while the cousin I had found in the same apartment on the first day I went there,was watching over her),which made us refuse the offer,and also Yennie claimed that we would have more freedom of movement while staying

in the Jin Jiang Fan Dian, which is not far away from the center of the town. She had a good point there, and thus the matter was settled: we would stay where we were, and pay for it.

9th February 1982

This morning I had bought two highly interesting books in the hotel's bookstore, that occasionally carries old and used books, which are as unique as they are expensive (I paid 50 yuan for both of them - and maybe the reader remembers that 35 yuan were exactly for these books, which I had mentioned earlier in front of Yennie's relatives, given to me by Yennie's aunt no. 2, a very generous gift, and not the only one we were to receive in the course of our stay here in Shanghai - we in return changed as much WHQ with them as we could, and once I bought a bottle of Cinzano dry when we were invited by aunt and uncle no. 2, which of course was not opened the same evening, but put away for a while, as is the Chinese custom in these matters). I spent most of the morning lying on my bed and reading in one of the two books, written by Jiang Kang Hu, the founder of the Chinese Democratic Republican Party (not the Guo Min Dang), and the man who first established a girl's school in Peking in 1905. He also was the first one who went overseas (to Canada) and initiated the first center for Chinese studies on this continent (at McGill in Montreal). A very interesting character, and a far travelled man.⁴³

At noontime we went to the police station to apply for another extension, because we had been in China two months now and our visa was running out tomorrow. Coming from the police, who said we could come and pick our papers up after three o'clock, we accidentally ran into Yennie's youngest uncle, whom we were to meet at the entrance gate to the Tong Ji Da Xue, a reknown university, which is leaning more towards the natural sciences than humanistic studies (if such a term is adequate at all in present day China - but it isn't all that bad - I had read an article in a Chinese newspaper that was examining the humanist aspect in Marxist theory, stating that it could not be denied that at least parts of early writings by Marx had an underlying humanistic current, which meant that it wasn't that bad altogether and that China could well try to take a more broad-minded view than the purely utilitarian one). We thus did not go there to learn about scientific research, but because we had an appointment with the chief of staff that taught German here. I must admit that I do not remember too much about this first visit to the Tong Ji University, except that we were shown around by one teacher with her student (he was actually older than her, had studied aerodynamics and aeronautical design, and now learnt German because the government wanted to send him to Stuttgart, where he was supposed to deepen his knowledge, which no doubt he will), and one person employed by the university to do administrative tasks, as well as supervising the teaching staff. Yennie's uncle was with us all the time, and we also had lunch here together. I still recall that we were shown the library of the German faculty, and that the teaching material for the higher degree students included Boell and Grass, modern writers of my country. Mrs. Fu, the German teacher, told me that at present there were about 30 teachers of German origin in the department, and additional twelve Chinese teaching around 700 students whose major is German, and it was expected that by next year the figure would increase to one thousand. German is the first foreign language here at this university, which actually is based on a medical institute that was founded by a German, which was the first department of the future university complex. I did not record anything in particular about our visit to this place, which was only the start for a series of visits we were able to pay to various cultural institutions during the next few days.

After we had said goodbye at the gate to the staff that had shown us around Yennie's uncle took us home with him, where we had dinner, talked about our trip

to Huang Shan and recovered our things that we^{had} left with the family when we set out for Hangzhou and the mountains. Later we went to the apartment where I had stayed during our last visit to Shanghai, and we were truly surprised to find almost all of Yennie's relatives gathered together here, looking after the old woman, whose death was expected every moment now (she died the next day). Abangnabu was her name and she had been looking after various members of the family when these had lost their parents while still young. She must have been a strong virile woman in her own time, but now she was lying under a thick cotton blanket and she was so thin and looking so emaciated that her body was hardly distinguishable under the heavy blanket, with her head sticking out at one end. She looked peaceful, but once in a while would move her head slightly, which caused everybody to look at her and put her blanket back into its proper space. We took numerous pictures of the whole clan, including the dying Abangnabu. On one of the tables in the room was a low pile of new clothes that was the new outfit for the old lady's long journey into the realm beyond. This outfit consisted of a new traditional Chinese dress, shoes meant for bound feet, pieces of cloth for binding the head (I am not really sure what they were meant for) or parts of the body, and a little bag of cloth for precious gifts, that would be of use to her in the other world. All these items were embroidered and of good quality. We left the gathering together with aunt and uncle no. 2, who had the same way as we, and took the bus back to our hotel, where we arrived rather late.

10th February 1982

I had promised Yennie to take her for a swim some day before we would leave the country, and this morning I made my promise true: we went across the street to the Jin Jiang Club, which was only in 1979 opened again to the public (for foreigners only, with a few exceptions). Formerly the French Colonial Club, the Jin Jiang has perhaps the most splendid Art Deco interior to be seen anywhere in Asia (says my guidebook). The club features billard, pingpong, pinball machines, and of course a huge fifty meter pool that was heated. We were the only ones in the pool and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves for about two hours, while Yennie was trying to teach me how to swim and breathe at the same time. There is an admission of three yuan to the club, and an additional two yuan per person has to be paid for the pool, which prevented us to make this event a daily routine.

In the early afternoon we had an appointment with Yennie's cousin the cook, who took us to the Shang Hai Wen Wu Shang Dian, one of the local antique stores, perhaps the biggest one. They had a magnificent collection of whatever Chinese crafts have produced (except painted scrolls and calligraphy), including seal stones, some of which were sold for 8.000 yuan, around 11.000 DM. Prices were generally very high, and I saw an article that I had seen being used by an old woman in Tun Xi, a small copper basket filled with charcoal to warm the hands, I believe, on sale here for 500 yuan, which says a lot about the sums of money foreigners are willing to pay for good craftsmanship. The Chinese picnic-baskets were selling for 350 and 400 yuan, while most of the vases and pottery would cost between 500 and 3000 yuan. I liked what they had, but I would rather have regarded the whole collection as part of a museum and not for sale, but every article had a little sticker attached to it stating the price, which in a way spoiled the experience of merely enjoying the form of a vase for example.

We spent a good while in the shop, which also sells old jewelry and must have a considerable business during the tourist season, then followed our guide to his home, which meant that we were awaited already by Yennie's oldest aunt and uncle (this cousin of Yennie was their son - they also had a daughter who was going to get married in the near future (she probably is by now) to the son of the antique shop's manager, who had greeted us at the doorstep of his domaine).

Because we thought it was still too early to have a meal that would throw us out of competition for the rest of the day, we demanded a little freedom from our all too helpful friend and said we still wanted to see the Shang Hai Mei Shu Zhan Lan Guan, the exhibition hall for fine arts, which was very close to the place we were supposed to show up this night. We had to make a vow not to come later than six o'clock and then were let go, which made us heave a deep sigh, because we finally could pursue our ways again (our friend has a sort of all-embracing attention that is at times hard to bear - he was also the one that had brought us to Suzhou and introduced us to Yennie's relatives there). We now went into the exhibition, which turned out to be two-fold. On one side was an exhibition of a contemporary Chinese painter, who was present the moment we came in, receiving acknowledgements and having pictures taken of himself and his paintings, which Yennie did not like very much, as she pointed out, they were too heavy in their colours and not subtle enough in terms of composition, to be able to compare them to the ancient masters, which everybody strives to copy, at least in Taiwan. I don't understand very much of it, but the second exhibition aroused my interest and I could tell Yennie a few things about churches and architecture in western countries, because that was what this exhibition was about: architectural design and various stages of decor and ornament techniques applied to altars, facades and interior structures of churches, libraries and other public institutes and institutions before 1850 in Portugal, Holland and France. Many people had come to have a look at the photographs and small pieces of ornament that were on display, and I must say I was very surprised and excited to see masterpieces of my own culture and background, because it is a rare opportunity to see western artifacts of whatever style or craft being shown publicly (in the Chinese museums we have visited we never - with one exception - saw anything that had its origins farther west than Samarkand or Persia; the exception is Peking, where a few things are shown that were presented to the emperor by members of foreign legation coming from England, France or other western states - some of the presents had been gratefully received, but never opened, since nobody at the court was really interested what a barbarian country would be able to produce that they thought worthy in their ignorance to present to the Chinese Emperor, the Son of Heaven himself). It was already late and the building was about to close its doors when we left the place, setting our mind in the right disposition to communicate with the overwhelmingly warm and friendly attitude that was shown towards us in every household of Yennie's relatives.

We were welcomed and given tea at their house as soon as we arrived, and after some small talk (we never discussed politics or social problems with members of the family) we were seated at the table we already knew so well. There were around ten persons, and since it was a round table everybody could be *de lai*, get in touch with each other, which was rather one-sided in our case tonight, because we were urged by eight people to eat this and try from that, everybody very agile when it came to heaping food on our plates or pouring thin wine into our cups. The meal tonight consisted of fifteen (big) dishes, which included: duck, sour pork meat, a sort of Frankfurter Wuerstchen, which were not far from the original, fish, shrimps, big crabs, sea cucumber, vegetables and mushrooms, and towards the end a sort of Kaltschale, which to the very end was followed by an enormous bowl of what we would call Eintopf mit Rindfleisch (no potatoes, though), which had a very German taste and could count for a good meal all by itself. I do not know how we survived that dinner, but I think we had learned a great deal before that prevented us from really overeating ourselves, and also did we refrain from eating anything during the daytime, because we knew what was waiting for us this evening. The attentive reader may have noticed that I mentioned a number of dishes that are hard to come by these days by an ordinary person, and I do not know how our friend the cook had managed to organize them, but since he is in the business himself he might have connections that he had no doubt found useful today.

As you can imagine everyone was in a state of excitement and high spirits by the end of the meal, an occasion nobody of us would forget for quite a while. When we went downstairs again to have some more tea, Yennie was presented with a painting scroll that had been ordered for her from a professional painter, and that bears her name plus a dedication to her. I also received a present, which are the San Xing, the three stars of Chinese belief, small porcelain figures representing long life, wealth and luck.

We made some more pictures of the family, who for that occasion dressed in Gala, and then we were taken by Yennie's oldest aunt across the town to meet and visit Yennie's mother's uncle and his wife, who were very surprised to see us (it was long after ten o'clock), but who nevertheless begged us to come into their house, where we sat in the only room and talked and answered a series of questions. These people here were old now and they had retired from their jobs. At the moment they were making a living by selling toilet paper and matches (a strange combination), and through that they had their daily income which enabled them to survive, and maybe they had done some saving during their working period. They were naturally curious to know all about us and about Yennie's relatives in Taiwan. In the end they invited us for dinner on one of the next evenings, but we had to refuse because our time was limited now and we prepared to leave Shanghai on the 13th to go back to Hangzhou.

We came back to the Jin Jiang Hotel when everything was already fast asleep and silent-it was past midnight.

11th February 1982.

The program for today was a visit to Fu Dan Da Xue, the most renowned university in Shanghai (there are three big ones: Jiao Tong, Tong Ji and Fu Dan), which rivals the Bei Da in Peking. I did not like the gate: it was low, narrow and ugly, like the hole to a bee's state that is besieged by a mob of wasps and therefore narrows the gate, so that the bigger wasps may not be allowed to slip in. Furthermore, an old and ever suspicious hag was standing under the low roof watching everybody that came or went. Around 10,000 students—a lucky elite—study here, or work in one of the two factories that belong to the university. We were greeted by some kind of a delegation from the department of history and philosophy, which led us around the campus (it looks much better than the one of Bei Da), and finally into a room of the history department where we had a general talk about topics interesting to the foreign student like me, which I regret not having recorded. The persons we were dealing with and that answered our questions were one professor of history, together with his assistant, another professor of philosophy, about whom I must say a few more words later, and two more persons that did not partake in the process of teaching, but rather had administrative functions in the bureaucratic body of the institution.

We started the conversation by introducing ourselves and giving an account of our interests, that in my case lie with the Tang, art and thinking, while the present persons did research about Ming times, both historical and philosophical. Our next point were the conditions for the foreign students, and the problem why so much material was withheld from them, why access to the public libraries was so difficult etc. Another question that I was asking referred to the dissertations that were written year for year in western countries about various aspects of Chinese civilisation, and if this material was available here at the source and taken into account with one's own studies. What answers we got were on behalf of the history prof rather witty and intelligent evasions, and on behalf of the philosophy professor very cautious and carefully weighted, sometimes even stuttering, replies. This man did not want to give himself away after all he has been through,

I thought. Yennie also remarked later that the man was clearly frightened by our questions, which were not inquisitive at all, maybe just a little probing, disturbing the surface. Nevertheless, this man who had studied under Feng You Lan before the "Liberation of 1949", showed in his behaviour very obviously signs of persecution experiences and mental torture, and I don't know how he had survived it all. He was the oldest of us at the table, and he wanted to be left in peace. Now we had come, conjure up the old pain.

After the talk we were shown around in the department of history itself, including the faculty's library, where I noted all the necessary reference works like the Xin Tang Shu and the Jiu Tang Shu⁴—in fact all the official state histories were there—together with a fair number of scientific journals regarding historical aspects, both in eastern and western languages.

Because it was lunchtime we were then taken to the canteen where we had some food, noodles and soup like everybody else.

In the afternoon we had an appointment with a teacher of the faculty of librarianship, who was working and teaching not on the campus itself but in the Fu Dan Fen Bu, a branch holding the main library of the university. Mr. Dong, who was already waiting for us, was a man of about 34 years of age, and he was the friend of Mrs. Fu, the German teacher at Tong Ji university, who had learned of our visit to Fu Dan and arranged this additional meeting with her friend, who showed us around his field of work, explained his job, and who shared with me a common interest in the Chinese classics such as Chuang Zi and Meng Zi, from which he could recite whole chapters by heart, a thing that is not so common anymore than it used to be in the old days, when all the classics had to be learnt by heart in order to pass the imperial examinations. After a friendly chat we left the library again and, accompanied by Mr. Ma, our guide for today, took the bus back into town. About this Mr. Ma, a young man in his late twenties and not very talkative, which probably made him suited for the job he is doing, is to be said that he works for the Qing Nian Hui, a kind of youth organization or Y.M.C.A. of China, which brings young people of different countries together, yet mostly on behalf of the government. We had been able to slip into the organization to be taken care of and shown around because Yennie's youngest uncle happened to know the secretary general of the Shanghai branch of this organization, a character we had the honour to meet the next day. Before Mr. Ma left us to return to his office he asked us what else we would like to see in Shanghai, and that would be of interest for us. We did not know what to say, because we did not know the city that well, but then I replied that I would like to have a look at the Main Shanghai Library, which houses the second largest collection of books in China (I said that I am a bookworm before, remember?), and where I could perhaps get a photocopied edition of a work I had been looking for all over the country and had not been able to find, because it is forbidden and out of print. I mean the Zhong Guo Zhi Xue Li Shi written by Feng Yu Lan, and by now I was entirely indifferent to the fact in which language I would be able to get the book, which exists in Chinese and in a formidable translation into English. Mr. Ma promised to arrange the visit for the next day, after which we shook hands and parted.

The evening belonged to ourselves, and we spent the time strolling around town, along Nanjing Lu, and then finally returned home to our hotel, where we had a late meal, which made us feel rather lazy and sleepy.

12th February 1982

My idea of getting a cheap copy of Feng's History of Philosophy proved to be not realizable, since every page I would have wanted to copy would cost me 3 mao, around 40 Pfennig, and counting the two volumes which had together over 500 pages, it would have been a major investment, which now towards the end of our journey was a matter to consider twice, because we were running out of money. I also did not find the leisure to inquire about the other books I would have liked to see, mainly books new and old concerning pottery and ceramics. I must admit that I had no idea what treasures the Shanghai Library has to offer, and I was rather pursuing my own interests when I had asked Mr. Ma to arrange a visit for me. Yennie did not accompany us, but had said she would come later, when we were finished. We had an appointment with the secretary-general today, and Yennie's youngest uncle as well as his wife were both present. Yennie was waiting for us in front of the building, which we entered and where on the fourth floor we found our host for today and Yennie's relatives, which rose from their seats to greet us. After thanking Mr. Liu for his concern and help we had a short talk about our trip and how we liked China, a question that was embarrassing for Yennie, who could not well say what she thought in the presence of Mr. Ma and a party member, what the secretary-general was, no doubt. We were then escorted to one of the restaurants in the same building, where a table in a separate room in the back had been arranged for us. Yennie and I were both very much surprised because nobody had told us that we were going to eat here. Mr. Liu must have thought us worth it, and maybe he was pursuing his own ends with the invitation. To the beginning of the meal he presented a small booklet to Yennie indicating that she should read it over and carefully think about it. It was propaganda material from the Communist Party, meant to be placed in the hands of those who came from abroad, like overseas Chinese and Taiwanese, who are very welcome in the People's Republic. The meal thus had a political purpose, and I was not excluded. It clearly showed that we had the full attention of Mr. Liu, but not for the reason to make friends but rather because he wanted to convince us that China today was a nation on the march, a fully developing country and a nation of sworn brothers and sisters. At one point, during our meal, we both looked at each other and instantly felt a deep aversion against the other's character. The man obviously had power, and when I asked him if he had ever left his country he replied that he had been to Rumania, Russia, North Korea and a few other Communist States in Eastern Europe. I did not like the man at all, and Yennie felt the same, uneasy and wary of what was said. The meal, on the other side, was fine. It was not only fine, it was refined. Two dishes that are very rare and celebrated in China are the You Yu and the Gui Yu, two kinds of fish that taste like something between a tender trout and a young chicken-I had never eaten such kind of a fish before, which in addition was garnished with pieces of ham and mushrooms. It tasted absolutely delicious, and the big pudding that came to the end made me utter that the local cook no doubt was a master of his trade. At last came a soup that looked rather dubious to me, since it was a broth of chicken feet, which were still in the bowl, and are supposed to be another delicacy. I tried them, but I must say that it took me some time to overcome the reserve against this dish, which had the praise of all the other guests at the table.

There is not much more to be said about this meeting, which ended soon later after we again had expressed our gratitude towards Mr. Liu and his capable organization. Yennie's uncle stayed behind when his wife and we left the man at his office; I think he wanted to have a close talk with his friend about how our visit would benefit him or both of them.

Yennie's aunt had to go back to work, but she pulled us into various shops to buy things like Ginseng and mushrooms for her older sister in Taiwan, which I took with me on the way back and delivered to Yennie's mother.

It was 1.15 pm by now and we had to rush to get in time to another appointment we had today, with Mrs. Fu and her students at the Tong Ji institute. We arrived in front of the gate at 2.00 sharp, and were well received by the teachers and the student of aerodynamics, who later told a few stories about the cultural revolution to the young students, who were listening to him very attentive until he had finished. We were sitting in one of the dormitories, with raw unfinished furniture in an arrangement that the beds were above each other on the walls, surrounding the tables that were used for studying, which stood under the window. Students from all over China were here, including one from Harbin, a place in the heartland of Manchuria. Everybody was asked to speak German with me asking questions about my mothercountry, but strangely nobody dared to say something, and when a thing was said it was so because the teacher, Mrs. Fu, had applied some pressure on the students, who were now asking about my age and family relations, or other model sentences like that. Nobody did ask about conditions-cultural, political, social-in Germany, the country whose language they had chosen to learn in order to serve their country. Here I was mistaken. I was not mistaken with the fact that they would serve their country, but with the first presumption that they had chosen their field. When I was asking Mrs. Fu's teaching assistant why she had chosen German for her studies, she told me a long story of her plans and her career, but with a very sad and low undertone, which I thought was due to some unhappy love affair, but in the end of her recount she said with an even lower voice that she at that time (and even today it is very much a matter of the state than the individual) she was not allowed to choose for herself, but rather put into the German department by order from above, and here she was, still. All this she was telling me in fluent German, so the other students around her, which were just at the beginning of their studies, did not understand what she was saying. They were very occupied, anyway, because Yennie now had become the main figure in the room, and for the rest of the afternoon she had to answer questions about her whereabouts and Taiwan's living conditions, economical process and other aspects of daily life.

We spent over three hours with Mrs. Fu and her class, and after an exchange of home addresses and many good wishes we said goodbye to Tong Ji Da Xue, which every year sends three of her over 700 students of German to my country, which is a very low number, I must say. Mrs. Fu was still waiting to go, but she was self-contained and had already overcome her disappointed hopes.

We in the following went back to the city center by bus, bought a few things for the next day's ride to Hangzhou, and then returned to our hotel, where we spent the evening.

Very late, it was after ten already, suddenly four of Yennie's relatives appeared to say goodbye again, and to hand us our train tickets, that they had taken upon them to buy. We learned that our train was pulling out of the Shanghai train station the next morning at 5.55 am, which was the earliest time we ever set out to get somewhere in China, but the day would be still young when we had arrived in Hangzhou, and that was a good point.

Faced with such an early starting time, which made Yennie grumbling a few words that I did not understand, we had to start packing now, in order to be ready the next morning. This procedure took some time because we by now had bought a number of things (although I had sent four parcels of books home already), and when we climbed into our beds it was around midnight.

13th February 1982

Merely by chance and due to Yennie's attentiveness we reached the right bus this morning at around five am. Thus we arrived at the railway station just in time for our train to Hangzhou, which is 189 km away to the southwest. The trip takes around three hours, and shortly after ten we were back again at the Hangzhou Bin Guan asking for a bed in the tong pu, the dormitory. As we were told, everything was full, but we could have a bed in an unheated room in one of the side buildings of the house. We agreed and checked into the place for four yuan per night. The room had fourteen beds and was rather spacious, but very spartan what furniture and service was concerned. It had one good point, however, that was that Yennie and I could stay together.

We had lunch in the hotel restaurant, after which we went out to walk around Gu Shan, visiting the museum and climbing up to the place the seal engraver's society had formerly chosen as their dominion, a beautiful place overlooking the sea, with a small very old stone pagoda standing on a platform of unheavened rock at its highest point (concerning this island see page 87/88, where a closer description is given, including the museum). We took it easy today, were just strolling around and returned back to our room very early that day, and since it had no heating Yennie was lying in bed by nine o'clock. We were both very tired and exhausted somehow, and we thought it was because we had gotten up that early in the morning. Only later did we realize that it was an exhaustion which went much deeper than that, a profound physical weariness that resulted from over two months of constant travelling, shifting and moving around, trying to get to see merely the main places of interest of this vast country and its ancient civilization.

As I just come to read in my notes: we also did go into town to buy the tickets for the train no. 49 going to Canton, which will be on Tuesday (today is Saturday). We will be glad to leave and take a rest (it took me more than a month to recover from this strenuous journey, and I know Yennie had similar difficulties in coming back to her normal level of energy).

I did my writing, as had become the usual thing to do before I went to bed, had another cup of tea and then slowly crept under the cold and damp blanket of my bed.

14th February 1982

There was a lot to do and see today. We were wandering around in the hills surrounding the lake and bearing famous names that ring a familiar bell with almost every educated Chinese, like Long Jing Quan for example, the spring that is said to constitute the ideal equivalent and medium for the dried leaves of the tea bearing the same name. The spring lies to the south west of the lake, and a temple stands nearby where one nowadays will be served tea on a purely commercial basis, and we did enjoy sitting here in the comfortable bamboo chairs, nibbling at some cookies and sipping the tea (which was second or third choice, but is about the same one holds to be of good quality in my country, where the very good tea is very rare - Yennie claims that the best tea comes from Taiwan, anyway, and I am inclined to agree, since the only really good tea we had in China was the Gui Hua Cha which we had bought in Guilin, and then only one packet, unfortunately). From the Long Jing Si our way led us to the top of the Yu Huang Hill, from where we had a splendid view over the city and the lake on one side and the Qian Tang River with the famous Liu He Da (the Six Harmonies Pagoda), the symbol of Hangzhou, which may be seen on every tea can with Long Jing tea prepared for export. This pagoda is located at the top of Yuelu hill, and originally was built in 970 ad., for the purpose to deflect the huge waves of the powerful tidal bore brought on by the full moon. It also served as a lighthouse for river traffic. Its name

refers to the six codes of Buddhism: to observe the harmony of body, of speech, and of thought, to abstain from temptation, from uttering opinions, and from accumulating wealth.

There was another very famous pagoda in Hangzhou, the Thunder Peak Pagoda, which has a highly interesting story of its own, the story of the White Snake, but for lack of space here I cannot relate the legend, which is a rather long one.

On top of the Yu Huang Shan we found a small well surrounded by those eroded stones as they were used in the gardens of Suzhou, and a new building containing a restaurant and a teahouse. Both were closed when we arrived there. In the times of the Song the Altar of Heaven (the place the emperor worshipped to once a year and which has its equivalent in the Tian Tan in Peking) stood in the middle of the fields of the eight trigrams, a short distance below the peak of the hill, in the middle of fields and cultivated land.

The area around the Yu Huang Hill and the adjoining elevations used to be covered with temples and which are now either in ruins or closed for restoration. We came to see another one of them later during the day, however, more to the south of the lake. But first we descended from the Yu Huang Hill and followed a path that led us passed a number of caves, which are popular places among the citizens of Hangzhou for the weekend. Today there were not many of them, luckily, but what is very advisable is that one might take along a flashlight while visiting the caves, and thus make it possible to discover the beauty of the sculptures of the carved foxiang further inside. There are organized tours during the tourist seasons, though. When we came to the Yan Xu Dong we regretted very much that we could not penetrate the cave farther because the carvings were of supreme quality, displaying an excellent craftsmanship and devotion to the material and the subject. The second cave called the Shi Wu Dong also contains some good sculptures from the tenth century, but the greatest part of the figures has been destroyed during the cultural revolution, and one can only see the blank spots where they once had been standing or sitting in their niches and at the entrance. A third cave said to have contained as fine a statues as anywhere to be found in the whole of Hangzhou had suffered much the same destiny like the second cave: blank places of rock, marks of sawing and ruthless hewing. I remember this cave as being enclosed by a high wall, that not only surrounded the entrance to the cave a little further inside, but also various buildings of wooden structure scattered in a park-like arrangement on the hill on top of the cave.

Our next stop was at the Hu Pao Quan and Si, which is located at the foot of the Hu Pao Shan, and to be reached from the road which also leads to the Hangzhou Zoo; one has to pass the entrance of the zoo and the bus station on the other side of the entrance was the place we were waiting for the car to take us back into town after our return from the Hu Pao Si. The legend of the place tells us that in the ninth century a priest called Xing Kong wanted to erect a hermitage here, but since there was no water the mountain god sent two tigers, who scratched at the ground, and revealed a spring. Thus it is still called the "spring dug by tigers", and a living tiger was kept here in a cage until the mid-sixties. The temple itself is to be reached by following a long paved path through a beautiful setting of bamboo woods with lush underwood and the small creek from the spring running alongside the way. This place was also converted into a public teahouse, and since it is easily reached by bus we found it very crowded with Chinese from the city, who spend their leisure time here, drink tea and play cards. The place consequently was very renao (hot and noisy), to say the least, not mentioning the rudeness of the people in their behaviour, as Yennie quickly observed. A hall behind the teahouse was under restoration while we were there, and on closer examining the process I had to admit that the people working here really knew their work: not a single nail is used, and the old wooden pillars having rotten from the moisture in the ground are replaced with scill and caution.

At the spring itself a stone lion is now standing in the middle of a small pool, which can be reached by traversing a narrow passage way. The whole scene is very

attractive and forms a popular place to line up and take pictures of one's wife sitting on the back of the tiger, holding the baby in her arms, which is very frightened by the crowd and just in time the man gets ready to take his picture starts to cry, whereas the whole thing turns sour and the next couple urges to get to the tiger and have their pictures taken by someone they know. A few foreigners were there, too.

It was around six o'clock when we came back into town, sitting in a very crowded bus, as usual. We had taken in some impressions of the scenery and the hills surrounding Xi Hu in the south, between the river and the lake; with all its beauty spots and many attractions this area is one of the very pleasant places in China to visit.

The next day we wanted to go to Shao Xing, or better, Yennie wanted to go, and I wanted to stay in Hangzhou and visit the Ling Yin Si and try to organize tickets for sleepers, because the train ride to Canton would be a long one. Yennie's cousin came again to our hotel that night and changed some money with us. Furthermore he wanted to try and buy tickets for the performance of minority groups that we wanted to see, but he could not manage to get the tickets, as we found out the next day.

We had dinner in the hotel and then sat down for a glass of beer in the cafeteria, which in the evening is converted into a dancing hall with a local band playing a brand of disco and waltz. This was one of the reasons why we left the place very early and climbed into our cold beds, where we had a final cup of tea and discussed plans for the next day.

15th February 1982. C

I wanted to surprise Yennie and so I followed her on the train to Shao Xing without her knowing that I was on the same train. I had changed my mind the night before, but did not tell Yennie of my plan, thus keeping it secret from her. Only when she got off the train in Shao Xing did I put my hand on her shoulder and made her laugh at my boyish game.

Shao Xing is as old as all the other places in this fertile country near the Long River and the southern end of the Grand Canal. Its history is densely interwoven with the history of the Revolution of 1911, since Lu Xun was born here and spent a good part of his youth in the town, and because of Qiu Jin, a heroine of the revolution, was also born here (in 1875). It has a long standing tradition of merchants serving all over the empire, as well as a reputation for the well versed secretaries that the court used to recruit from this area. A network of canals spreading out from the town has made it an important trade center for the region of northern Zhe Jiang, but probably the most famous product of the city is the Shao Xing Jiu, a yellow rice wine known all over China. We had a glass of it together with a chunk of boiled beef in a small restaurant in the main street, and it had style and turned me on, while Yennie also seemed to like it.

There are several places of interest in the city and its suburbs, but we first took a walk along one of the canals, watching the boats being loaded and unloaded. Yennie had a special interest in going and seeing her Lao Jia, the place where her family comes from and where her grandfather is buried, although nobody really knows where. We could not get hold of a boat that was going to the village Yennie claimed her family stems from, and renting one we found too expensive. Thus we stayed where we were and visited a little lake in a park called Dong Hu, which is a marvellous natural basin with a cliff on the backside that goes straight up for more than 200 feet. Here we strolled around, had a cup of tea in the local teahouse and then took the bus back into town. The guide we had with us at that time did not mention the Lu Xun Museum that had been established to commemorate the great writer, and thus we missed the chance to see it.

Coming back from Shao Xing, which is only one hour away by train from Hangzhou we were told by Yennie's cousin that the performance had been cancelled, which was a pity, because as we had heard it was a magnificent spectacle. On the other hand we were grateful that we did not have to sit in the theatre for two hours or more because definitely one of us would have fallen asleep and thus embarrassed our sympathetic friend, who had tried everything to get the tickets for us. With things being what they were we now said goodbye to him and told him to say greetings to our hosts in Suzhou, to where he would return very soon to marry. Our train was due the next day, and we too would soon return to where we belonged. We had our last good meal in the hotel, contemplating the long train ride before us and the long winter we had spent in this country, a country where winter is hovering over the minds of the people ever since the Great Leap forward and the crushing of the Period of the Hundred Flowers. Many things seem to come alive again (for instance tonight in the restaurant we saw a delegation of Japanese Buddhist monks who obviously were on a visit to the Ling Yin Si, which is the head of the Buddhist Congregation in this province. These exchanges with Japan have a very long tradition, but it had been some time that no monk from Japan had stepped on Chinese soil), still clinging to the fertile grounds of the past, which for so long has been covered with frost. I had drawn great inspiration merely from one Chinese winter, and my hopes for a Chinese spring are shared with innumerable people inside and outside the country, yet I think the many old ones of them will not see it.

16th February 1982

After boarding the train we had our ^{usual} small dispute with the conductor, who in this case was greedy and wanted to set us up on the first class, the same dealing as we had when we boarded our first Shanghainese train in Guilin. We were much more versed now in how to behave and deal with those kind of personnel, but it still took us one hour to get the sleeper we wanted, and then again we changed the ticket, because the car was too crowded and I had spotted a much quieter car at the beginning of the train. Here we finally found rest and stretched our tired bodies on the empty benches, after we had had a meal with smoked ham and fruits and tea.

This morning it was remarkably warmer in town, the pavement was shimmering while a very concentrated smell of the stands selling fruits and other foods lingered in the air in front of the railway station. Spring had finally arrived, and now it was my fate to leave. We had set our minds on leaving, and there was no way reversing our plans and preparations. Fortunately we were going south, not north, and that made it easy to say farewell to the first hint of the warmer season. The distance between Hangzhou and Canton by train is approximately 1622 km, and our arrival was to be late in the afternoon of the next day. We thus had plenty of time to write the last letters out of the People's Republic, finish the diary and arrange everything for our arrival in Hongkong, where we wanted to have our pictures developed, an important issue which turned out to be such a great disappointment (as the reader may know already only 9 films of the 23 rolls we had taken in China did turn out alright). The train to Guangzhou passes Zhejiang, of course, then enters into the province of Fujian, and maybe even touches parts of the neighbor province Jiang Xi, before it comes to Guangdong Province, where rice and cotton, many varieties of fruit and grain are grown. Fujian, by the way, is directly opposite the island of Taiwan, and many Taiwanese indeed come from this province, preserving their dialects from the mainland. Once in a while one hears either in the press of Taiwan or the radio broadcast of the People's Republic that smugglers have been caught in the Formosa Strait, with liquor like Shao Xing Jiu on board or Japanese radios, if coming from the other side back to the mainland. Here distances are shorter and connections are easily made, out of eco=

nomical interests mostly. There is not much more to be said about this trainride, except that it took very long, around thirty hours.

17th February 1982

We arrived in Canton this evening and went straight to the already familiar Liu Hua Bin Guan, where we cut any arguments that should arise over the prices for a bed short by showing the receipts I had carefully kept and collected, thus indicating to the receptionist that we already knew everything there was to know about the hotel, and that we wanted the same beds again, which this time was granted us in considerably shorter time than when we first came to Canton and haggled over the beds in the dormitory, that was said to be full. We were not in for jokes or lies today, and everything went smoothly. We paid our bill in advance, then left the hotel to follow the Huan Shi Lu to see if a restaurant we knew was still opened. It wasn't, so we came back the same way and on the other side we spotted a still lit small tavern, where we ordered our food and sat down to eat. At the same table with us was a young couple with a baby, who were now joined by a friend of the man, who was in his late teens and who now started to tell in plain Mandarin about his experiences in Hongkong, to where he had escaped three or four times, but always been discovered and brought back again. He said to the couple that the food they received in the prison in Hongkong was better than the food they had ordered here and for what they had to pay so dear. The man looked away and said nothing, while his friend continued to tell him stories about the streetlife of Hongkong and the marvelous things one could see in the stores. He said he wanted to try it again, he had to. There was nothing here that held him, since he had no job nor wife or child, and there was no future for him in this land. I understood him perfectly. One who had been outside and had seen all the other extremes of materialism so aggressively advertised in Hongkong would ever be drawn towards it. If he had not been broken by the times of the past 25 years, that is,

We had bought our tickets for the train no. 99 going to the boarder the next day immediately after stepping of the train, or, to be more precise, we immediately lined up for it, and after waiting around 45 minutes finally got them.

We had a last cup of tea in the cafeteria of the hotel, then went to our rooms for a good night's sleep.

18th February 1982

The train this morning at 7.32 was a fast one, and it took us to the boarder in two hours. Here we first stood in line with all the other people passing the customs, but we were soon guided away to another place specially designed for foreigners, where we were questioned if we had our cameras still, and I answered by pointing with my foot to the pack on the ground, saying it was in there. The officer seemed to believe me, because we did not have to open our packs and show him what was inside, instead we were let go through unheeded and without any tricky interferences, that custom people are so well-versed in. The train on the other side was already there, waiting for the last ones to get on board. Although we had a first-class ticket we found it as crowded as any train in China, but after a while we managed to get a seat and thus arrived exhausted but safe and sane in Hongkong Mong Kok at noontime.

E N D E

I

Supplements and Corrigenda

- 1 My reference here is Simon Leys:Chinese Shadows,Page 113.
Fox Butterfield gives another figure.According to him the Chinese Communist Party apparatus consists of 24 ranks.See his book:China-Alive in the Bitter Sea,Page 67.He says:At the bottom of the stairs on which the cadres are ranked are the ordinary clerks,grade twenty-four.Then comes the section chiefs and department heads,grades fourteen to eighteen(Butterfield fails to give notice of grade nineteen to twentythree),bureauchiefs,grade thirteen,deputy minister grade eight,governors of the provinces grade six and seven,and cabinet ministers grade four and five.Deng Xiao Ping and Hua Guo Feng were said to be grade two or three,while Mao and Zhou En Lai were grade one,together with Zhu De, the former head of the National People's congress.
- 2 This is not correct.The Guo Min Dang emerged out of a party that bore various other names before it was actually called the Guo Min Dang(like the Tong Meng Hui for example),and it was founded much earlier in Japan(1905).
Dun J. Liu says:In 1917,together with a few of his followers,he(Sun Yat Sen)set up an independant government in Canton.But he left the government after only one year because the southern warlords had skillfully taken it over.In 1920 he returned to Canton;and the following year with the help of the warlord Chen Qiong Ming,he proclaimed the establishment of a new national government with himself as the president.Thus two governments existed simultaneously in China,one in Peking,and the other in Canton,but only the one in Peking had the recognition of the western powers.
- 3 Shan gao Huang Di yuan (mountains high,emperor far away)
- 4 There are more than fifty minorities in China,and over twenty of the tribes or peoples live in Yunnan and Guangxi,not to mention Sichuan, which also counts as a melting pot for different races.
- 5 The current exchange rate for one US \$ is 1 to 1.70 yuan.
The German DM is changed 1 to 0.75 yuan,which means that 1.33 DM come equal to one yuan.This is only the official rate,though.
- 6 Yennie actually told me later,when this had already been written,that most of the group were cadres or relatives of cadres in the minority areas.
- 7 About 17 million city youngsters were sent to the countryside before and to the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.Only 4 or 5 million are still there,have settled maybe,but the rest returned to the cities like Shanghai,Peking or Canton,many of them illegally,which means that they can't get the necessary papers which would enable them to receive proper housing,food and clothes.As a result street gangs spring up,organized groups which wear there hair longer,grow mustaches and wear sunglasses.They are called the toughs,or Liu Mang in Chinese.
On the crack-down of the intellectuals see Simon Leys:Chinese Shadows, and
- 8 For this subject see

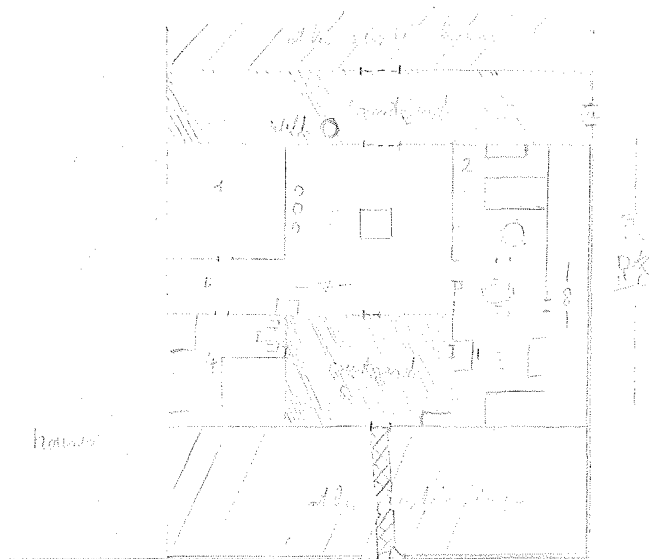
- 9 This temple is called the Yuan Tong Si.
- 10 Tang Shi San Bai Shou is a famous collection of poems from Tang times. A complete collection of poems exists containing over 49,000 poems, but the one I am referring to only has 300 to 306, according to the publishers edition.
- 11 The Zi Hai says that E Mei Shan was called Guang Ming Shan by the Buddhists and Xu Ling Dong Tian by the Daoist monks.
- 12 Where it all started means that this province is the cradle of the Chinese civilisation, and used to be part of the kingdom of Qin, which later between 246 and 211 conquered all the rest of China and thus unified the empire (see my introduction in German p.1-3).
- 13 It was the starting point of the silk road.
- 14 Chang An means "Long Peace", while Xi An means "Western Peace".
- 15 An Lu Shan was the governor-general of the province of Fanyang, an area near the northern boarder. He revolted in 755/6, first took Luoyang and six months later the capital Changan. The court had fled to Sichuan Province, but the emperor Xuan Zong lost his Prime minister and his favourite, Yang Gui Fei (or Tai Zhen), which made him a sad and broken man for the rest of his life (the poet Bai Ju Yi - 772-846 - wrote a long and famous poem about this never-ending sorrow, called Chang Hen Ge).
The forces that the court then called into the country were mainly barbarian from the Huihe tribe (Uighurs), which had agreed to the kings terms of liberating the empire and suppressing the rebellion, but had demanded that the wealth of all the recaptured cities should count as their war booty and thus be in their possession forever. The result was that the rebellion was quelled in a short time and An Lu Shan killed, but like in Goethe's Zauberlehrling the invited ghosts from the other side of the boarder could not be controlled until the year 780, when they had done almost more damage than the rebellion itself.
- 16 The Xian incident saved the neck of the Communists, which were threatened to fall apart after the Long March out of Jiangxi, forced by the blockade of the Nationalist forces under Jiang Kai Shek. They arrived in Yanan in northern Shenxi in 1935, and some historians (like Dun J. Liu for example), hold the view that they would soon have fallen apart as an organized group. The statement that Jiang merely visited Xian to find peace and recreation from his campaigns against the Communists on the one side and the Japanese on the other is incorrect. The fact is that he flew to Xian to investigate the case of the Young Marshall Zhang Xue Liang, the commander of the Manchurian forces, who had started to negotiate with the Communist leaders. His army originally had the task of fending off the Japanese in the north, but they had retreated as far south as the Communists had to flee to the north (from the Nationalists), so that both armies were facing each other now in northern Shenxi (Shaanxi). The Communists soon began to work among the officers and the soldiers, arguing that that the civil war should cease at once, and that all Chinese should unite to resist the Japanese invaders, regardless of faith or conviction. The Young Marshall was so taken in by the sincerity of Zhou En Lai's patriotic spirit that he ceased to fight against the Communists, and instead fraternized with them. Jiang Kai Shek

was alarmed by the development and flew on an inspection to Xian, the capital of Shaanxi. There he was seized and taken prisoner by the Young Marshall, who asked him to cooperate against the Japanese. Jiang refused, and it was not until the next year that a period of cooperation between the Communists and the Nationalists came into being, which did not last, however. The Japanese remained in the country until 1945.

- 17 People in urban districts are only allowed to marry when they are 27 or 28 for men, and over 25 or 26 for women. In rural areas the limit is five years below these figures.
- 18 It is strange that Fox Butterfield relates the same kind of incident from Xian, saying his wife had been in one of the local restaurants in the city proper in eating a meal with a friend of hers while a crowd of Chinese in rags and feathers stood around watching them like hawks. When her friend stood up to pay they came forward and grabbed whatever was left on the table. This story happened early in 1981, and I wonder what had incurred such severe circumstances that we, who arrived one year later, still found the same situation before us in the same city.
- 19 For a good and comprehensive survey of peoples and races around the heartland of China see: Charles O. Hucker - Some Approaches to China's Past page 28-31.
- 20 Joseph Needham in his second volume of Science and Civilisation of China, page 441: Between +389 and +404 the Northern Wei emperor established a professorship of Daoism (Xian Ren Bo Shi) at the capital Ping Cheng in Shanxi, and a Daoist workshop for the concoction of medicinal preparations. James R. Ware in his translation of the section of the Wei Shu concerned with Daoism (page 224 in Journal of the American Oriental Society 1933) says in his paper that the academy actually existed longer than the dates given above, but that in the end the emperor's interest gradually waned (in the elixir of immortality) and finally elapsed. Nevertheless, imperial patronage allowed the Gong Guan on Mao Shan for example.
- 21 The philosophical Daoists of the early period, that is.
- 22 For a description of the Bai Yun Si and its function in the forties (1940-46) see the article of Yoshitoyo Yoshioka, Taoist Monastic Life, in: Facets of Taoism, edited by Ana Seidel and Holmes Welch.
- 23 The hotel's name is the
- 24 The short description following is out of Nagel's China Guide, which by the way has also furnished these notes with most of the historical material concerning the cities and their development. That not everything that is written in this guide is correct may be seen by the two corrections that had to be made as no. 2 and no. 16. Other corrections may follow.
The guidebook we relied on in China during our journey was given to us by a friend in Hongkong, and we had to return it to him after we had come back. I therefore bought the new 1982/83 edition of the same book and used some material from it as well. The China Guide Book, by Fredric M. Kaplan and Arne J. de Keijzer.
- 25 Yuan Shi Kai, the successor of Li Hong Zhang in governing the province of Chihli (Hebei with Peking), tried to set himself up as emperor in June 1916.

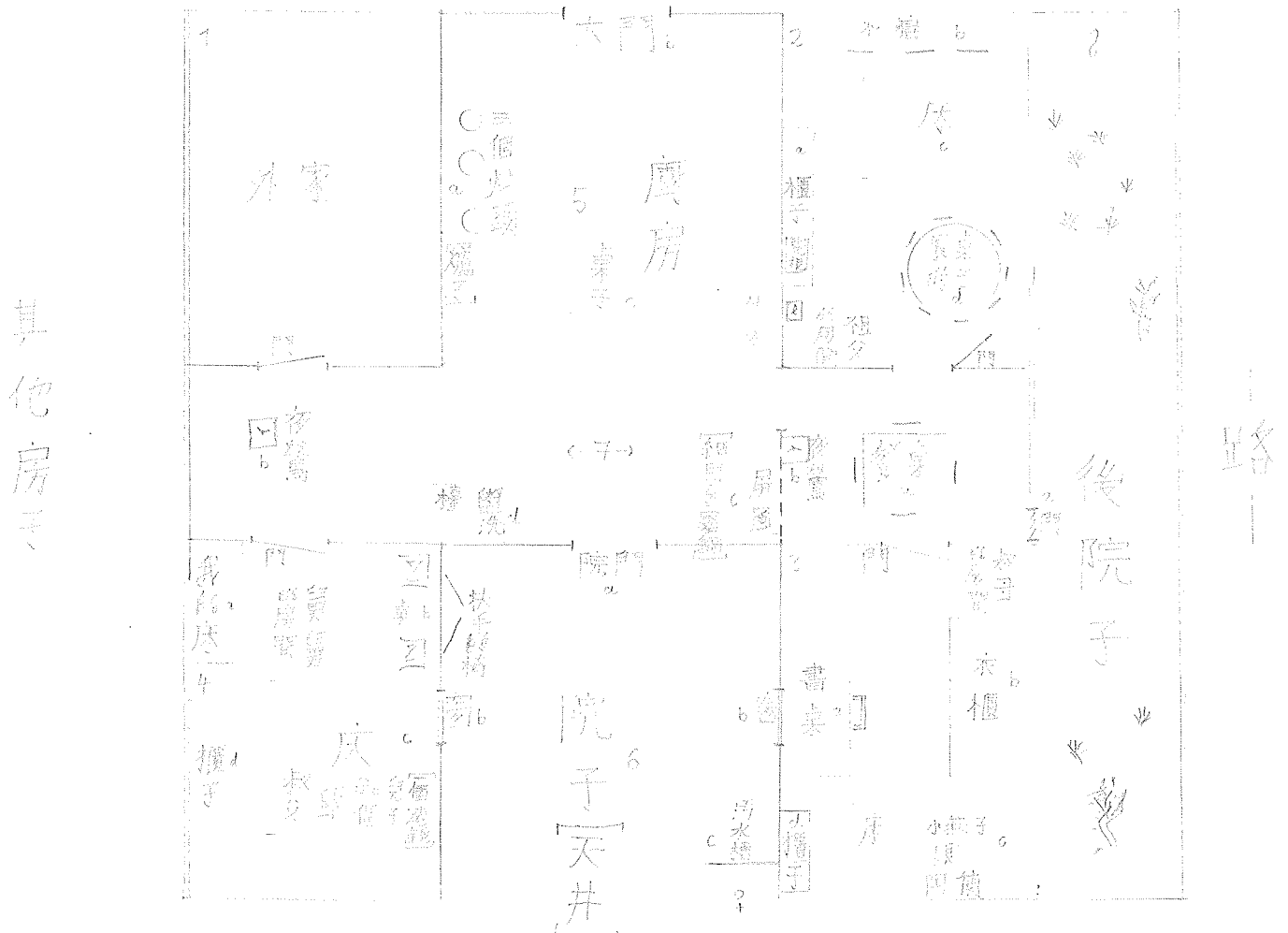
- 32f. 1 Room of the family who originally did not belong to the house, but was put in there by the authorities.
- 2 Grandfather's room
 - 2a a cupboard with the television set and the videorecorder
 - 2b wardrobe
 - 2c bed
 - 2d round table
- 3 Yennie's aunt's room
 - 3a writing desk
 - 3b wardrobe
 - 3c the bed that Yennie and her aunt slept in
 - 3d small cupboard
- 4 Yennie's uncle's room
 - 4a my bed
 - 4b a small table and two armchairs
 - 4c that bed was used by the uncle, his son and a cousin
 - 4d cupboard
- 5 kitchen
 - 5a three small round coal-burning stoves
 - 5b entrance gate to the house, leading to another court with a well
 - 5c kitchen table, used for preparing food
- 6 courtyard
 - 6a door from the court
 - 6b two windows
 - 6c sink with running water tap
- 7 vestibule
 - 7a dining table
 - 7b two cages with nightingales
 - 7c carved broken-through screen wall of wood, pattern traditional Chinese
 - 7d washing table with a washing basin
- 8 a narrow garden with a little green
 - 8a the door

32ff. The setting and surrounding of the house:



2-6 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

- 26 Yu Yan Xue Yuan means the Mandarin Training Center for foreign students.
- 27 It was closed for xiu xi. According to the Chinese Constitution, Article 49, every Chinese is entitled to have his xiu xi (siesta), which may take up to three hours in the summer.
- 28 There are a lot of liu mang in the streets. See no. 7.
- 29 Whom I consider to be a very good example of Confucian teachings and education, a Chinese gentleman.
- 30 Chongqing is said to have retained a bit of the original oriental qualities of the former empire.
- 31 Many were shaped by it, though, by being sent to the countryside, denunciation of their own parents or other kinds of mischief. There is a growing generation gap between the parents who worked hard for the progress of the country after 1949, and their offspring, who do not know what things were like in the old days, and thus fail to exhibit the revolutionary spirit that drove the country forward in those days. Besides, the Cultural Revolution disillusioned a great number of individuals, and in its aftermath made it difficult to uphold the credibility of the Communist Party. Elder people now speak of a lost generation, and not only in terms of qualification for a job because of the lack of education.
- 32 A small lay-out of the house we lived in while in Suzhou:



- 33 If you are in Peking and feel adventurous-have a look for the peace café in the Goldfish Alley,near Wang Fu Jing.
- 34 The inhabitants were merely putting up papers at their doors which had the character "shun",obedience,written on them.See Dun J. Liu,page 401.
- 35 The Chinese call them "huo chuang",living windows.
- 36 These figures are somewhat incorrect.The train from Suzhou to Hangzhou for example has to go back to Shanghai,I believe,and the additional 86 km to the 175 km from Shanghai to Hangzhou make up the figure of 275 km for the distance between Su and Hang.The real distance,measured on the Grand Canal, may actually be a lot shorter.
- 37 Also had the empress' clan relatives from this area,which was her native home before she was summoned to court in the north.
- 38 The Meng Liang Lu treats of the following topics:seasonal festivals(chapters 1-6),official buildings(7),ministries and other offices(9),offices,stores, army,police,firemen,postal service(10),surroundings,the port,dikes and sluices (11),the West Lake and navigation(12),markets,guilds,trade,and finance(13), gods,cults and temples(14),schools,monasteries,pagodas,celebrated sites(15), restaurants,inns etc(16),famous people native to Hangzhou(17),population, products,taxes,charity(18),gardens,pleasure grounds,clubs,unemployed,beggars (19),marriage,prostitution,pastimes,theater,professional storytellers(20).
- 39 This dowry or "bride price" is actually forbidden,according to the 1949 constitution of the People's Republic,but persons who want to get married might still have to pay a substantial amount of money for their spouse.
- 40 The guild of the merchants was very active during the Qing dynasty,but is of course no longer existant.
- 41 The name of the place is Ban Shan Si,or "temple halfway up the mountain".
- 42 Anhui is one of the poorer provinces in the People's Republic of China.
- 43 Jiang Kang hu was born in 1883 into a prestigious Jiangxi family.He studied Japanese and went abroad to Japan and,in1909/10,to Europe,where his first articles appeared in an anarchist newspaper.He later became a friend of Yuan Shi Kai,and served as cultural minister in the Chinese republic.He died 1932 in Shanghai,after having joined the communist party in the 20s, assuming the name Yang Du.
The statement that he was the founder of the Chinese Democratic Republican Party is incorrect.He was the father of the first Chinese Socialist Party, and thus had some influence on Mao.
For more information on Jiang Kang Hu see Stephen R. MacKinnon:Power and politics in Late Imperial China;University of California Press,1980.
- 44 The official state histories of the Tang dynasty,one former and the other written in the beginning of the eleventh century.

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