

- 83 A civil official, Yuan Yingrai, who obtained *jìn shì* (imperial scorer in the civil services examination, after attaining top three titles of 'zhuang yuan', 'bang yan' and 'tan hua').
- 84 The founder of Manchu power, known also by his posthumous title as the Emperor Taizu of the Qing dynasty. The Manchus were direct heirs of the Jurchens whose Jin dynasty (1115–1234) ruled over most of North China between 1115 and 1234. They did not officially adopt the new ethnic name 'Manchu' until 1635. The creation of a Manchu state was accomplished by Nurhaci, now the Khan (emperor). They were hunting, fishing and farming people of central Manchuria, east of Mongolia and north-east of the eastern end of the Great Wall. In 1636 the Manchu dynasty changed its name from Jin to Qing.
- 85 Hong Taiji is also known as Abahai. He was the eighth among Nurhaci's sixteen sons, and his successor.
- 86 A Manchu title bestowed on the sons of the imperial princes.
- 87 *Ming shi* (History of Ming dynasty), ed. by Zhang Tingyu (1672–1755).
- 88 Provincial Treasures, Provincial Judge and the Salt Commissioner respectively
- 89 Yang Gao nickname Jizi, was an imperial prince of the Sui Dynasty, 581–619. He was the youngest son of Emperor Yang.
- 90 Ming General Yuan Chonghuan (a native of Dongguan of Guangdong Province). With the help of the Jesuits, Yuan Chonghuan had built a kind of long-range cannon, named 'Red-hair Alien Cannon'.
- 91 The White Pagoda in Liaodong peninsula, Liaoyang, is one of the six most ancient towers in China. With a height of 70.4 metres, it is the tallest tower in the north-east region. It belongs to an historical and cultural site under state protection. See also Baita Pagoda.
- 92 An ornamental pillar in front of a grave.
- 93 Zhang Fei (c. 167–221) was a general of Shu Han in the Three Kingdoms period of China. His own men Zhang Da and Pan Qiang, while preparing his troops to attack the rival Kingdom of Wu to avenge the death of Guan Yu, killed him.
- 94 Zhao Yun (168–229) was an important military commander during the civil wars of the late Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms period. For most of his career Zhao Yun served the warlord Liu Bei.
- 95 The Minor Han dynasty – one of the 'Three Kingdoms'.
- 96 Traditional China's best-loved novel, which describes a righteous brotherhood of outlaws who protected the humble and the oppressed.
- 97 This is a famous traditional Korean novel. Author and date are unknown. *The Tale of Im Kyŏnggŏp* is the fictionalized life of famous general Im Kyŏnggŏp (1594–1646) from the time of the Manchu invasion. Many interesting and colourful accounts of his actions and attitudes can be found in the standard historical works.
- 98 Guangyou Temple, initially built during the Eastern Han dynasty, was one of the earliest temples built after Buddhism spread to China. It has been the most influential Buddhism dissemination centre in the history of north-east China.
- 99 A Tang dynasty writer; Lu Guimeng's courtesy name.
- 100 Du Fu or Tu Fu (712–770) was a prominent Chinese poet of the Tang Dynasty.

CHAPTER 2

Tales from Shengjing

(*Songgyŏng chapchi*)

[This is a diary account of a journey of 327 ri which took five days to complete. The journey began in Shilhe 9 August (10d 7m) and ended in Xiaoheshan 13 August (14d 7m) 1780.]



9 AUGUST (10D 7M) 1780

I cleared to a fine day after a brief shower. We left Shilhe early in the morning, and rode about 15 *ri* to Banqiaobao, 5 *ri* to Changshengdian, 10 *ri* to Sahebao, 5 *ri* to Baojiao wazi, 5 *ri* to Zhanjiangpu, 3 *ri* to Houshao qiao and 7 *ri* to Baicabao. We lunched at Baicabao and then resumed our journey, 5 *ri* to Yisutorai, then 5 *ri* to Honghuapu, 1 *ri* to the Hunhe River, crossed the river by boat and finally reached Shenyang (Shengjing). Our journey so far has taken us 61 *ri* from our starting point at Shilhe.

We stayed overnight in Shenyang, aware that the weather had turned extremely hot. When I looked around and out beyond Liaoyang City, I saw that luxurious growth filled the forest, while overhead a dawn flock of crows flew, scattering over a wide expanse of the plain. A line of thick morning smoke trails streaked the sky, while the emerging brilliant sunlight intermingled beautifully with the mottled ground fog. I looked north, south, east and west, across the four corners of the plain and found nothing to interrupt my view. Alas! In ancient times this was the place where heroes fought their battles a million times. There is a saying that goes, 'When tigers run and dragons fly, their terrestrial limit is up to your imagination.' Peace under the heavens has always depended on this vast Liaoyang Plain. History shows that when it was peaceful here, the whole world was without trouble. But once the peace was disturbed, it gave way to resounding drums on the battlefield. I wonder why it has

always been so. The reason might be that this large expanse of land, in which one's vision is uninterrupted for a thousand *ri*, is so difficult to defend. But defending the plain was always paramount to the Chinese, as without doing so a Mongolian invasion was considered inevitable. China strove to keep the plain in a peaceful state, which in turn kept the whole country at peace. It has been quiet for the last one hundred years, not because of the Qing government's exceptional moral and political influence, but because it is the place where the Manchurians rose to power.

To the east, Shenyang adjoins the Ninguta Tower.² To the north it tugs at Jehol. To the south it strokes Korea, and to the west the Great Wall ensures that whole world cannot budge an inch. In this place, the Qing has put down the most solid foundation, far beyond anything ever attempted throughout the history of China. Since our arrival in Liaoyang we have seen luxuriant mulberry trees and hemp fields. We have heard the endless barking of dogs and cocks crowing. Likewise, the plain was peaceful for one hundred years, yet despite this the Qing court would never relax.

The arrival of a multitude of Mongolian carts, probably as many as several thousand, each full of bricks, invited my attention. Teams of three bullocks, mostly white coloured, but with some of a bluish tint, pulled each cart. The bullocks were spurting blood from their nostrils, which resulted from the combination of extremely hot weather and the very heavy loads. Most of the Mongolian teamsters looked rugged, with their high noses and sunken eyes. They did not behave like normal human beings, due to their fierce posture and extraordinary quickness. They seemed to think it strange that our servants were going around with exposed shins.

As our horse drivers saw the Mongolians last year and every year, and understood their peculiarities, they joke with each other when they pass. They sometimes remove the Mongolians' headgear with their horse-whips and throw them on the ground or kick them around, like a ball. Even with this affront, the Mongolians are not offended or angered, but with both hands open, beg the Korean horse drivers to give them back their headgear. At other times, a driver goes behind the Mongolian, takes off his headgear, jumps in between his legs and pretends to be chased by him. He then suddenly turns around, hugs his prey at waist height and trips him up. The driver then sits on the fallen Mongolian's chest and

puts earth into his mouth. The Manchurians stomp their carts and stand there laughing at the performance. The Mongolian trapped underneath eventually rises to his feet, surprisingly sees the funny side of the event, cleans out his mouth, recovers his headgear and dusts it off, puts it back on his head and moves on without challenging his Korean assailant.

Out on the street was a carriage with seven people in it. They all wore red body cloths and appeared to have chains across their shoulders and the backs of their bodies. On closer inspection, I saw that a chain was fastened to the nape of their necks, with one end attached to a hand and another end to a foot. They were all convicted thieves brought from Jinzhou wei military police station, whose sentences were reduced by one grade from capital punishment, and were now on their way to exile to remote Helongjiang.³ The shape of their mouths and eyes instilled fear in the onlookers. However, by the way they laughed and clamoured, the prisoners themselves did not look at all worried.

Several hundred horses swept along the street; the last rider on a very fine horse and holding a kaoliang stick. All the horses had neither bridles nor reins, and occasionally their riders looked back to where they had come from. We reached Tapu tower. The tower here is in the middle of the town. It is octagonal, some twenty *ki* in height, with thirteen floors and hollow in the middle. Every floor has four arched doors, and I rode through one of them. But suddenly a dizzy spell overtook me and I left rather quickly.

The entourage had already entered the designated inn, and I also followed them into the backyard. But I was overwhelmed when I heard a puppy barking from under the beard of the inn owner. The man smiled at me and offered me a seat. The inn owner had a long beard, sported with white. He sat upright on a low chair in the room and outside an old lady was also sitting. She had a pale red hollyhock in her hair, and was wearing a dark blue skirt with a peach blossom design.

This old lady also had a viciously barking puppy at her bosom. The inn owner took a shaggy-haired puppy from his chest about the size of a rabbit with snow-white hair, and one *chi* in length. Its back was a light blue; it had yellow eyes and a pink mouth. The old lady tucked up her skirt, retrieved her puppy, and showed it to me. This puppy had the same colours as the inn owner's puppy. She said,

'Please don't think that we are strange. My old man and I sit around the house all day with nothing to do. Naturally, the days drag by, and

we feel quite bored. That's why we spend time with these puppies to ease the boredom, but we are often ridiculed by the people.'

I asked,

'Do you have any children?'

The old man answered,

'Yes, we have three children and one grandson. The eldest child is a secretary attached to the General of Shengjing; the second one is nineteen and the youngest is sixteen. They are both at school. The nine-year old grandson goes out to catch cicada on the willow trees and we hardly see him all day long.'

Before long the little grandson ran into the backyard of the house puffing, holding a trumpet in his hand. He hugged the old man's neck and begged him to buy the trumpet for him. The old man gave the boy an affectionate smile and reasoned with him,

'That has no use.'

The boy was good looking, and wore a silk jacket with a peach blossom design. He acted so boyish and cute, running here and there in a winning way. The old man then told the boy to say a greeting to the guest. When he was about to do so, a military policeman, glaring fiercely, followed the boy into the backyard, snatched the trumpet, and scolded him loudly. The old man got up and apologized,

'I am very sorry that the boy brought this trumpet, thinking it is a toy. There is no harm done to the trumpet.'

I reprimanded the military policeman,

'Now that you have found it, you should not make such a fuss, so as to embarrass the man.'

I asked the old man,

'What breed is this dog?'

'It is from Yunnan. They are also found in places such as Shuzong and Sichuan. This one is called "Yutuer" and the other "Xueshizi", and both of them are from Yunnan.'

The old man commanded his puppy to say a greeting to me. The puppy stood straight, lifted its front legs and mimicked the bowing posture. Then it knocked its head on the floor. My servant Changbok came to let me know my meal was ready. The old man said,

'As you have shown your affection for this puppy, I would like to give it to you. Please collect it on your way back after you have offered the tribute to the Emperor.'

'Thank you very much, but I cannot accept it so spontaneously' and departed swiftly.

With trumpet blowing, the entourage was ready to leave, but I could not be found and Changbok was sent to fetch me. The rice cooked sometime ago had already turned hard and I could not face it, especially being in a hurry to depart. I told Changbok and Ch'angdae to share it, and I stepped into a restaurant. I had a bowl of noodles, a glass of *soju*,⁴ three boiled eggs and a melon, and paid forty-two pieces of coin for the repast. The Chief Envoy and his entourage passed the restaurant on horseback, and soon afterwards I too rode out with Pyön, our reins in line. As my stomach was well satisfied from the meal, the 20 *ri* journey was expected to be completed without much effort.

At almost mid-morning (*sashí*) the hot sun made us seek the shady haven of the innumerable willow trees along the road from Liaoyang. We cooled ourselves that way while in the saddle. Often though, we had to come out of the shade to avoid the rain puddles under the willow trees. The moment I left the tree canopy a vicious sunbath, with the heat rising from the ground, almost choked me. I looked into the far distance and saw carriages and horses gathered like clouds, all taking advantage of the shade the trees offered. I pressed my horse to move faster so that I could rest there for a while. On approaching, I came upon several hundred merchants who had unloaded their goods and were cooling themselves.

A man sitting on the stump of a willow tree had taken off his body cloth and was fanning himself. Some drank tea or wine; others were washing their hair or having it cut. Some played dominoes and others competed with wrist wrestling. Amongst their luggage I saw patterned pottery and about ten multi-tiered baskets. The baskets were woven from peeled kaolin sticks and held either cicada or other chirping insects. Some jars among the luggage had red insects and green water chestnuts in them. The insects were floating on liquid in the jars and were the size of shrimps. They were kept as live fish food. I also saw about thirty carts filled with coal. Around me were people selling a variety of wares, like wine, tea, rice cake, fruit and other foodstuffs. They were all sitting on chairs, which made a line under the shade of the willow trees. I bought a half bowl of abunus tea and quenched my thirst. It was a sweet and sour taste, similar to that of *tibitung*.⁵

Two ladies were riding on a flat four-wheeled cart that was being drawn by a donkey. When the donkey saw a water pail, it rushed to it

with the cart attached. One of the ladies was old and the other young. They had rolled up their curtain and were cooling themselves. Both wore oriole-patterned deep-green jackets and orange skirts. They had excessively decorated hair, adorned with plantain lily, Chinese-pink blossom and a pomegranate flower. I thought the ladies might be Han Chinese.

Kwŏn suggested we should drink something, so we each had a glass of wine and then left. Before long, scattered pagodas came into view clearly from a distance. We thought Shenyang must be near. Out of the blue the following verse came to my mind:

Fisherman lifts his arm
and signals approaching Jiancheng,
Rising pagoda at the head of the boat
is looking taller, the closer we go.

A rule of thumb is that a person who does not appreciate painting is of likewise opinion with poetry. With painting, an artist uses a technique of making part of it look dark and part of it light, or part of it far and part of it near. While looking at the tower, I realized that the ancient poets must have incorporated this painting method in their poetry writing. The river in the verse is the River Hunhe that is also called Alijiang or Siaoliiao shui. Its fountain-head is Changbai Mountain and the Hunhe joins with the Shahe River and continues, hugging the southeast of Shengjing. It then joins the Taizihe River, after which its course changes towards the west. Finally, it merges with the Liaohé River, which becomes the Sancha River, before flowing into the ocean.

Just a few *ri* distant after we had crossed the Hunhe River we saw a mud-built fortification, which was not very high. Outside the fortification was a mob of several hundred jet-black cattle, which looked as if they had been lacquer-varnished. There was also a lake of about 100 *kyōng*⁷ with red lotus flowers in full bloom, and with plenty of ducks and geese. At the lakeside about a thousand white geese quenched their thirsts, but on seeing us they all stood straight with heads erect.

I entered the city of Shenyang through an outer-wall gate and quickly discovered how different the people were from those in Liaoyang. Not only the people, but the city shops too were different and ten times more luxurious. I stepped into the God of War Shrine and rested there for a while. The three commissioners present were dressed in official

robes. One old man wore an unlined summer jacket of fine silk and his plaited back hair had swung forward over his bald forehead. He bowed deeply to me and greeted me with a formal,

'You have put yourself out for me.' (How do you do?)

I responded by raising both my hands and noticed the old man paying special attention to my leather shoes. I thought he might want to know how they were made, so I took off one shoe and showed it to him. In an instant, a Taoist monk ran out of the ancestral tablet hall and approached us. He wore a Shandong silk full-length coat, rattan hat and black satin shoes. He took off his hat, touched his topknot and said,

'Isn't this the same as your shoe?'

He then took off his shoe and tried on one of mine, asking,

'What kind of leather is this shoe made of?'

'It is made of donkey hide.'

'What is the sole made of?'

'It is made of cowhide, which is oiled with perilla oil so it doesn't get wet, even in mud.'

Both the old man and the Taoist monk admired my shoe and put another question,

'This shoe may be convenient in muddy ground, but wouldn't it give the wearer blisters on dry land?'

I had to agree with him,

'It is true.'

The old man led me to a spot in the Tablet Hall, where the Taoist monk brought us two brass bowls of tea and served them himself. The old man wrote down his name for me. He is known as Funing and told me he was sixty-four years old. A Manchurian in government service, he held the position of Senior Secretary of the Board of Military Affairs in Shengjing. He had left the city temporarily to avoid the summer heat. While quietly admiring the lotus plants in the pond, which were in full bloom, he asked me,

'What is your official rank and how old are you?'

'My name is Pak Chiwŏn. I am simply a literati who came to China for sightseeing, and was born in 1737.'

He then asked the time, the day and the month of my birth, and I told him,

'I was born sometime between one and three o'clock in the morning (*chŭnshŭ*) of the 5th of March (5th day of 2nd month).'

He questioned me,

'Is it between three and five o'clock in the morning (*xid*)?'

'No.'

Funing was done with this, and then asked,

'The person who is sitting next to you came last year as well. At that time I stayed in Yutian for a few days on my way home from the capital. Is he a Hanlin Academy of Letters graduate?'

'No, he is a Royal son-in-law, and my third cousin.'

He also inquired about the Deputy Envoy and the Registrar, so I told him their names, their rank and their official posts. The envoys and entourage were changing their clothes and making ready to depart, so I too made ready. Funing came forward and held my hands,

'May you journey in good health. As the weather is turning extremely hot, please do not eat cold cucumber, or drink cold water. My house is in the south of Machang within West-gate and has a door-plate that reads "Senior Secretary of the Board of Military Affairs". Also, "Passed Civil Service Examination in 1753 (year *Kyeyu*)" is written in gold. It will be easy to find my place. About when do you expect to return?'

'It looks like I may be coming back sometime in October (9th month).'

As we left, Funing said,

'I would like to welcome you then, if there are no urgent official matters to attend to. As I already know your Four Pillars (*sejŏn*), I will look into your fortune quietly and wait for your return.'

He said it very affectionately, and seemed to be sad on parting from us. The Taoist monk had a sharp nose and was cross-eyed. His manners were very brusque and decidedly cool, in contrast to Funing, who was most respectable and very generous.

The three envoys departed one after the other on horseback. The general rule was that both civil and military officials formed a group and entered the city together. The circumference of the brick inner city wall¹⁰ was 10 *ri*, and it had eight brick-built gates. Each gate had three stories, each storey with its individual tiled roof. A smaller outer city wall protected the inner city wall. The gates on the east and west side of the wall were directly opposite each other.

At the crossroads the road level was elevated, above which a three-storied gate had been built. Here, the horse-drawn carriages were so tightly packed that the only movement possible was by intermittent stops and starts. The clamour of this traffic reminded me of the

movement of the ocean. Shops and shop houses lined both sides of the road, and some of these buildings had more than one storey. Their exteriors were colourful; some were painted, while others displayed blue placards and shop signs in red on elaborately carved windows. Inside, the shops were filled with precious articles of all kinds. The shoppers had fair complexions, and wore fine clothes and hats.

Shenyang was once Korean territory. Some say:

The Han dynasty of China had four commandaries in the region, and this is where one of them, Luolang (Kor. Nangrang), was located. It became Koguryo (37 BC-AD 668) territory during the Later Wei dynasty (Northern Wei, 386-535); during the Sui Dynasty (581-618) and the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

It was called Shengjing, and the Magistrare of Shengjing (Fengtian) governed the Prefecture, and the Deputy Commander in Chief of Fengtian commanded the Eight Banners. The Chengde county magistrare's office had established various departments, each of which had a lower civil court. Opposite the civil courts was a screening wall, and in front of each court lacquered poles were criss-crossed, which formed a railing. In front of the Deputy Commander's headquarter was a huge tablet pavilion. From where I stood, I saw the multi-coloured glazed roof tiles of a pavilion.

Kyeham, Naewŏn and I met a government official while passing the front of the Emperor's Travelling Lodge. The official walked at a hurried pace with a riding crop in his hand. Kwannok, Naewŏn's stableman, was with us and being fluent in Mandarin, followed the government official and on passing him, knelt on the ground with head lowered. The official helped him to stand up quickly and said,

'Please proceed comfortably.'

Kwannok bowed and said,

'Excuse me, Sir, I am a Korean servant. My master would like to view the palace where your Emperor resides. May you give him permission to do it?'

The official replied,

'There is no problem. Please follow me.'

I intended to greet the official myself, but he walked very fast, as if flying and I could not catch up with him. The road came to a dead end,

and I was before a red fence. However, the official turned back to us and pointed at a particular spot while he was entering the grounds,

'Please wait here.'

Then he turned around and disappeared. Naewön said,

'It doesn't look as if we can get inside, and it's boring to stand here doing nothing. Now we've seen the palace from the outside, I am satisfied.'

Having said this, Naewön left with Kye-ham and went to a tavern. I decided to take matters into my own hands and go inside the fence with Kwangnok. The gated front entrance we walked through was named Taigungmen. Kwangnok then offered me the benefit of his experience:

'The official we met earlier must be a palace guard. When I accompanied Prince Haün Yi Kwang, we looked around the palace without anybody stopping us. I am sure it would be all right to do that, Sir. Even if we met someone, all they could do would be to chase us out.'

'You are right.'

We walked into the palace's front hall. There were two hanging boards; one with calligraphy denoting 'Chongzheng Hall' and the other also with calligraphy, 'Zhengda guangmin Hall'. To the left of the Front Hall was Feilong Pavilion and to the right was Xiangfeng Pavilion. At the back of the Hall was a triple-storied Pavilion named Fenhung. To both the right and left side of the pavilion were side doors, inside of which were armed soldiers, who halted our progress. We retreated, and I viewed the pavilion from a distance. I saw tall twin triple-storied pavilions with multiple verandahs surrounding them. The roofs of these buildings all had five-colour glazed tiles. An octagonal shaped building on the second level was named Taizheng Hall. To the east of Taigung gate was Shenyu Palace where small images of Sanquin¹¹ were placed. On these images, Emperor Kangxi's signature 'Zhaoge' and Emperor Yongzheng's signature 'Yuxuzhen di' were inscribed. I left my vaniage point to find Naewön, and went into a wine shop (Ch. Jiusi, Kor. chuchön¹²). The shop had a flag hoisted with a gold inscription, which read,

'The brightest star in the sky.'

This reminded people of Chuchön County in Korea. The tavern had a red railing, a blue door, a white wall and a post on which pictures had been drawn. A great number of equal-sized brass wine casks were laid across poles, which were being used as shelves for the casks. Many of the casks had the names of a particular variety of wine written on them in

red. Chubu Cho Hakrong was already in the tavern and got up to greet me as soon as he saw me. In the room were fifty to sixty chairs of fine quality around twenty to thirty tables. There were also several dozen flowerpots, bearing plants that had just been watered. The begonias and hydrangas were in full bloom, and there were other flowers I had never seen before. Chubu Cho offered me three cups of lemon-flavoured liquor (*Fushou lan*). I asked where Kye-ham and the others had gone, but he did not know.

I left the tavern before Cho, but met him again on the street a short while later. He was very happy to see me and suggested we should go and drink more, to our heart's content. I turned around and pointed at the tavern, which I had just left, indicating I would like to go back there and continue drinking, but Cho wanted a change,

'It doesn't have to be the same tavern. There are other taverns as good as that one.'

At this suggestion we went into a different tavern hand in hand, as good friends do. The tavern was even more luxurious than the one we had just left. We ate a tray of fried eggs and drank a bottle of Shiguogon liquor, which completed our enjoyment there.

On leaving the tavern we found an antique shop called Yisuzhai. Five young and handsome graduates ran the shop. We promised we would come back that night for a chat. I made detailed notes of our conversations at the antique shop and these notes are included later under the title of 'Conversations at the Yisuzhai antique shop'. We visited another shop that was owned and run by a group of literati from distant places. It was named Geshanglou and sold silk goods. The owners' clothes were clean, and their conduct pleasant and agreeable, which made a good impression. We decided to meet with them again in the evening, also at the Yisuzhai antique shop.

When I passed in front of the Board of Punishment, I noticed that the gate of one of the courts was left wide open. However, a barrier of cross-crossed narrow boards restricted the entrance, so that people could not go into and come out of the building freely. That is, the gate was wide open but the area was securely fenced. I told myself that I was only a foreigner and had nothing to fear. Though there are many gates here, this was the only one left open. I thought I would look into the workings of a government office, and my thoughts led to action. I traversed the barrier and stepped inside the gate. No one stopped me.

I saw an official sitting on a chair on a platform; while behind him another man waited with pen and paper ready in hand. In the yard below a prisoner was prostrated, with a guard on each side holding a large truncheon. Information, or perhaps a confession, was being demanded, but without raising his voice the official gently pressed the prisoner for an answer. Eventually, the official's patience was exhausted and he yelled at the prisoner. On the official's command, the guard dropped his truncheon, rushed at the prisoner, and struck him on the cheek several times with the palm of his hand. They say the Chinese are lenient with criminals, but even so I never heard of punishing a prisoner merely by a slap on his face.

After dinner, on a moonlit evening, we stopped at the Geshanglou Silk Store. There, we met a lot of people, before going on to the Yisuzhai Antique Shop, where we talked well into the night before returning to our lodge.

10 AUGUST (11D 7M) 1780

We stayed in Shenyang last night, and this morning I heard the sound of gun-fire. Usually, when shopkeepers open for business in the morning their custom is to fire a small gun into the air. On a clear and very hot morning I got up hurriedly and went to Geshanglou, where people were already congregating. I chatted casually for a while before returning to my lodging for breakfast. Later, a group of us went out to the street for sightseeing. I met two men passing by walking arm in arm. As they looked so gentlemanly I thought they may be educated men, so I went forward and made a deep bow. The men released their arms and returned my bow with reverence before entering a shop where natural medicines were sold. I followed them into the shop and watched as they bought two *binlang*.¹³ They quartered one *binlang* and gave me a piece to try while they were chewing. I asked if they could write down their names and where they lived, but both looked at me with dazed expressions, obviously not understanding my request, and with deep bows they left the store.

Every year Yenjing (Beijing) hands down the salaries of high-ranking civil officials and military officers of the Eight Banners in Shenyang. The amount is said to be as much as 1,230,000 *ling*. This money is then redistributed to the Xingjing, Chuanchang and Ninggua areas.

That evening the moon shone brightly. I suggested to Pyön Kyeham that he accompany me to the Geshanglou. Instead of replying, he asked

the Chief Interpreter whether it was all right to go. On hearing this request the Chief Interpreter was quite alarmed, 'Shengjing is not different from Yenjing, and it is mindless of you even to think that you will roam the streets at night.'

On hearing this, Pyön was quite dispirited and resigned to not going. The Chief Interpreter did not seem to know what we did last night. To avoid being detected and reprimanded, I left furtively, but told my servant Changbok that if anyone enquired after me, he was to say I was outside obeying a call of nature.



AT THE YISUZHAİ ANTIQUE SHOP

These are some of the people I met and conversed with:

Tian Shike (styled Baoguan) comes from Wuzhong. His courtesy name is Daigen or Futing. He claims to be a descendant of Tian Chou.¹⁴ He lives in Shanhaiguan Pass and has opened a shop here with a man named Yang Deng. Tian is twenty-nine and stands seven *chōk* tall. He has a wide forehead and a longish nose. Of smart appearance, he struck me as a very kind man. I was told he has gathered a lot of general information about antiques.

Li Guineng (styled Linzai) is from Mianzhu of the ancient Kingdom of Shu (221–263). His courtesy name is Dongye. He is also about seven *chōk* tall and twenty-nine, the same age as Tian. Li has a wide square-set jaw, and his complexion is so white it is just as if he powders his face. His voice is as clear as a bell.

Mu Chun's (cour. Xiuhuan) pen-name is Shaoting. He is from Shu, and twenty-four years old. A very handsome young man, with beautiful eyes, which look as if they have been drawn on his face. It's a pity that he is illiterate.

Wen Bogao (cour. Wuxuan) is from the Chengdu prefecture of Shu ancient state. He is thirty-six and is also illiterate.

Wu Fu (cour. Ttangen) is from Hangzhou sub-provincial city. His pen-name is Yizhai and he is forty years of age. Of limited education, he is charming and pleasant.

Fei Zhai's (cour. Xiata) pen-name is Baoyue lou; Jiazhai; or Zhizhou, but I do know he is from Dalian. He is thirty-five and has five children. He writes and draws and his sculptures are excellent. He is also a fluent

interpreter of the Confucian classics. Fei is poor but likes to help people, and thinks his children will be blessed by his willingness to help the needy. I heard he had just returned from Shu, where he helped Mu Chun and Wen Bogao with their bookkeeping.

Pei Kuan (court. Hefu) is from Lulong Prefecture. He is forty-seven and around 7 *ch'ok* tall, with a magnificent beard. His wife, Madame Du died at the untimely age of nineteen. Pei looks like a virtuous man. He drinks, is well read and writes with an eager hand. Pei has written two volumes of *Ketingji* (Collected works of Keting) and two volumes of *Qingmei shihua* (Qingmei Poetry Talks). He has also written *Linxiangxuan ji* (Anthology of Linxiangxuan) and during our conversation he asked me to write the preface for the book, which I did.

There were several more people at the gathering, but they contributed nothing worth recording. They did not look as fine as Mu Chun or Wen Bogao, and made their living as simple merchants. I spent two nights with them, but could not recall their names. I asked Mu,

'Why is it that someone so young and as handsome as a painting leaves his home town and lives away from home? Both Li and Wen are from Shu. Are they related?'

Li replied,

'Please do not ask Wen. He is very handsome, but like a *guanyu* (jade cap),¹⁵ is empty inside.'

'It is a very harsh comment.'

Li answered at some length,

'Wen and Mu are cousins on the maternal side, and I am not related. All three of us left Shu by boat in the 2nd month of 1777, with a cargo of Shu silk, and passed the goods on to Wuxian county, Jiangsu Province, via Sanxia. We followed the merchant's road to reach the perimeter of the Great Wall and opened the shop here three years ago.'

I liked Mu and wanted to get him to write something, but Li shook his head, saying,

'Both Wen and Mu can talk like a phoenix but cannot distinguish the letter *shi* (pig) from *hai* (the last of twelve terrestrial branches).'¹⁶

'How could that be?'

'It is true. They both have Youshan¹⁷ Mountains in their ears, but their eyes cannot recognize even a simple letter like *ding* (T-shape). There is no illiterate deity in heaven, but there are chattering parrots in the human world.'

I commented,
'If you are right, even if one asked Chen Lin¹⁸ to write a declaration it would not cure my headache.'

Pei came back with,

'This was a common way of teaching the classics during the Han dynasty, but when Han entered into the period of the Six Dynasties it was realized that this method of teaching was a mistake. This is the so-called "oral and audio instructions", and even now at the village school house or the Confucian school they emphasize that learning should be by listening, and not writing or reading at all. Because of this, the students understand lessons by listening only, and cannot read a single passage. But the method makes students cite the works of philosophers and literary scholars fluently. However, when it comes to writing they cannot handle even one character.'

Li asked me,

'What is it like in your own country?'

'We open a book, teach them how to read it, and explain what it means.'

Pei who was marking a text interposed,

'It is really a right way of teaching.'

I asked Lord Fei,

'When did you leave Shu?'

Pei answered for him,

'It was early spring.'

'How many *ri* is it from here to Shu?'

Fei said,

'It is about 5,000 *ri*.'

I then asked,

'Are Lord Fei's eight sons from one mother?'

Lord Fei smiled shyly, but Pei answered,

'No, two concubines helped him from both sides. I don't envy the fact that he has eight sons, but it would be like going to heaven if I could borrow one of his concubines.'

Everyone within earshot burst out laughing. I changed the subject,

'On your way here, have you passed a road in Jiang made along a cliff?'

'Yes, I did. It was a very narrow winding pass 100 *ri* long, where you can hear monkey chatter every hour of the day, and nothing else. It is

really hard to get to Shu, regardless of whether you go by land or by water. The saying is that it is tougher to get there than to get into heaven. In 1772, I went to Shu on a boat against the flow of the river. In seventy-four days we had just managed to reach Beidicheng. While the boat was still under way I realized it was late spring and that all sorts of flowers were in full bloom on both sides of the riverbank. For a lonely traveller watching through the porthole, the nights dragged on. A cuckoo cried and a monkey screeched. The cranes wept and the falcons laughed. These were the only scenes on the silent moonlit water. Then, huge rocks on the cliff tumbled down into the river and banged into each other as lightning struck. This was the foretaste of the summer monsoon. Even if you were loaded with money and gold as a reward for going through the pass to Shu, it is too painful to endure. Its heart-wrenching hardship would turn the hair white.'

'You must have endured hardship. But when I read Lu You's *Ryu shui*¹⁹ (Record of entering the Kingdom of Shu) I was so excited I felt like dancing with joy.'

Pei expressed mild disagreement,
'It is not necessarily so.'

That night the moonlit sky was as bright as day. Tian had just returned after preparing food and wine. He arrived with:

an earthenware jar of lamb chitterling soup,
a tray of cooked duck,
three stewed chickens,
one whole piece of steamed pork,
a carp,
two saucepans of plain rice,
two dishes of fried mixed vegetables,
two trays of fresh fruits,
two trays of cakes,
three bottles of Linanju and two bottles of Jizhoujin wine.

In monetary value this feast would be about two *liang* worth. Tian came forward and said politely,

'To prepare this unworthy food, I missed listening to your excellent talk.'

I got up from my chair and apologized.

'I shall not dare to sit down and receive the fruits of so much effort.' At this remark the hosts rose and said,
'We have a most precious guest here, and feel ashamed that our food may not be good enough for him.'

Everyone stood up and moved to other seats, and the owner closed the shop.

Two fan-shaped lanterns, covered in green silk, hung from the cross-beam of the room. They had paintings of flowers and birds, as well as a verse penned by a well-known poet. Two square glass lamps released light as bright as day, and lit up the room in which we dined. Everyone offered me a cup of wine. However, the duck and chickens had their legs and beaks still attached, and the chitterling soup had a mutton tang, all of which was not to my taste. After trying these dishes, I simply ate the cakes and fruit.

Tian looked through the record I had made of our conversation and expressed his admiration of the writing a number of times, saying how good it was. Then he asked,

'Your Honour mentioned before our meal about wanting to buy some antiques. What kind of precious goods do you have in mind?'

'It does not have to be antiques only; I also want to buy some stationery. If the antiques are elegant and rare, I am not concerned too much about their cost.'

He reassured me, but only partly.

'Soon you are heading for Beijing and will be visiting Liulichang Antique Street. It won't be hard to find them. The problem is that it is not easy to distinguish an authentic antique from a fake. I don't know whether you have the ability to distinguish the genuine articles from the false antiques?'

'How could a humble connoisseur from a poor corner of the ocean be a candidate to distinguish an authentic piece from a fake one?'

Tian then explained the situation at some length.

'This place is a city in name only, being merely a backwater of China. Therefore, all trade dealings have relied on Mongol, Ningguta and Chuanchang, etc. As well as that, border customs are so crude and lacking in refinement that there are few receptacles of elegance or unusually beautiful colour to be found. Worse still, you will find even fewer receptacles of the Yin dynasty (1766-1154 BC) or pottery of the Zhou dynasty (1066-256 BC). I noticed earlier that in your country the ways

you deal with antiques are quite different from our ways in China. Even with such commodities as tea and ingredients for medicines, Koreans are not concerned with good quality, but only with cheap deals. Alas, when you do so you cannot discuss genuine or false products. Not only with tea and medicines, but household pottery too, as heavy dishes are difficult to transport. So they buy them in Biannmen to take with them across the border. The goods they buy are discarded useless articles, which the merchants are unable to sell inland. The buyers in Biannmen are deceived and the merchants make excellent profits out of them.

The articles sought by gentlemen are well above the average standard. You and I have met in a foreign country by accident, and though we have not spent much time together to exchange conversation, we have become friends. Because of this friendship I would not dare to deceive you, and will do my best for your purchase.'

I was moved by this assurance,

Your words are truly from your heart. You have made me drunk with your wine and filled my stomach with your virtue.²⁰

It is an excessive compliment. Please come back tomorrow morning and look around all the articles in my shop.'

Pei joined our talk,

'There is no need to discuss tomorrow morning's business. Let's enjoy this night with our honoured guest to our heart's content.'

All present agreed with these sentiments.

Tian was not through yet though and continued with a touch of sadness,

'In ancient time Confucius said, "I wish I could live in the lands of the Nine Eastern Barbarians."²¹ This indicates that if a man of virtue can live there, it must be a refined land.²² Though you live in a far off place, your bearing is impressive. You are well read in the Confucian classics and the works of Mencius, and disciplined in Confucian values – truly a man of virtue. It is shame that we live so far apart, and before we could talk our hearts out, time is running out. What shall we do?

Li put many circles on this subject to emphasize it (they are communicating in writing), and being moved by the situation said,

'I feel exactly the same – affectionate and sad.'

After passing the wine cup around twice more, Pei asked,

'How do you compare the taste of this wine with your country's wine?'

'Well, Lianan wine is too mild and Jizhou wine is excessively flavoured, so that for me, they both are missing their genuine wine taste. We have occasionally fine wine fermented according to legal formulae.'

Tian asked me,

'Do you have hard liquor?'

'Yes, we do.'

Tian then got up from his chair, took a mandolin from the wall closet and played a couple of tunes. I wanted to hear the words of the music he played.

'The ancient saying is that many people in the states of Zhao (424–222 BC) and Yen (1122–225 BC) sang sad songs.²³ All of you must know the songs very well. Please let us hear some.'

Pei was reticent about their singing ability,

'None of us sings well.'

Li took another angle,

'Their sad songs originated from the literati of small and poor ancient states of China, who were unable to achieve their ambitions. But now we are united as one kingdom, with a virtuous emperor looking over us. All of our four classes²⁴ enjoy their callings, virtuous men become contented officials of the illustrious royal court, and the emperor and officials between them offer and receive verses. The people toil their lands and dig their wells while they sing with contentment under a peaceful reign. In this environment how do you expect people to sing sad songs?'

I countered,

'When the country is governed by a virtuous emperor, one is expected to go forth and serve in the royal court. As you seem to be masterminds with abundant knowledge and skills, why are you not in the service of your government instead of being buried in this remote town?'

Pei commented jocularly,

'I assume that Lord Tian would be the only one among us who could handle that sort of thing.'²⁵

Everyone laughed at this remark. Li made a strong point,

'These things have their own time and fortune. They are not something one can do by forceful means.'

Li took out an anthology from a compartmentalized bookcase and asked me to read it. I read *Hou chushibiao* (Kor. *Hu ch'usap'yo*) in a loud voice, but without Korean punctuation. Many of the guests sat around

me and listened. They all expressed their deep admiration. After I had finished reading, Li picked out Yu Liang's Memorial to the Emperor Ming,²⁶ *Ci Zhongshujian biao*²⁷ and read it aloud. His tone was so clear and his sonorous voice was like listening to an orchestra of stringed and wind instruments. The rising and falling sounds were so distinct that even if I could not follow each character, I could certainly follow the particular paragraph of the Memorial he was reading.

It was already midnight and the moon was set, but I could hear people's footsteps outside the shop. I questioned Tian about this, 'Is there a night watch in Shengjing?'

'Yes, there is.'

'Then why are so many people out on the street at night?'

'They all must have worthwhile business to attend.'

'Even if there is a matter of importance to attend to, how could people go about at this time of the night?'

'There is no reason why one cannot be on the street. A person who does not own a silk-covered lantern is not able to go out, but every street has a guard station where a guard keeps watch, equipped with spear and club to sort out the miscreants. Because of this I don't see any difference between day and night, for the people who want to be on the street.'

I wanted the final word,

'As it is late and I feel sleepy, how about getting back to our lodge with a lantern?'

Both Pei and Tian pooh-poohed my suggestion.

'No, you must not, because you will be questioned by the watchman. He will ask you why you are out on the street at night, and where you have been. It will be a big inconvenience for you. If you are sleepy please rest here, though I have to be forgiven for the place is not so tidy.'

Mu got up, dusted off a wooden bed, preparing to make it up for me. I stopped him,

'I am not sleepy any more. I am sorry I have kept everybody awake so late.'

They were not put out,

'We don't feel sleepy at all. It's a very rare occasion in our lives that we get such a precious visitor to spend the night with and have such wonderful conversation. Even if we could just sit here and talk like this under candlelight for one hundred days, it would never bore us.'

After this, they busied themselves by warming wine, preparing fruit along with some appetizers for the drinks. They looked quite excited. I wondered why it was necessary to heat the wine and was told,

'Unheated wine is bad for your lungs and may poison your teeth.'

Wu had sat through dinner in an upright position, gazing straight ahead. I asked him,

'How long has it been since you left Hangzhou?'

'It has been eleven years by now.'

'Why did you leave your home to live here in this strange land?'

'I left because trading goods is my livelihood.'

'Is your family with you here?'

'Although I am forty, I am not married yet.'

Wu Xilin's²⁸ posthumous name is Yingfang. He was an eminent scholar from Huangzhou. Was he a relative of yours?'

'No, he is not.'

'Lu Fei, Yan Cheng and Pan Tingjun are all celebrated scholars from Xihu. Do you know them by any chance?'

'I have never heard their names mentioned. The reason is because it has been such a long time since I left home. But I do recall seeing a painting of peony flowers by Lu Fei. He is from Huzhou.'

Soon afterward a rooster crowed, and the neighbours started to move about. I nodded off on a chair and went fast asleep, from overtiredness and inebriation. However, I awoke suddenly at daybreak and saw that everyone was still sleeping, in various positions, leaning against the wooden bed or sitting on chairs. I poured myself a couple of glasses of wine, and then woke Pei to tell him I was leaving. The sun had already risen by the time I returned to my lodgings.

When I arrived Changbok was still sleeping, which indicated that no one – from the top to the lower rank, knew of my absence. I tapped Changbok lightly with my foot to wake him up, and asked,

'Was anyone looking for me?'

'No one asked for you, Sir.'

I urged him to get water to wash. I hurried to the upper chamber after washing my face and putting on a horseshair headband. I had arrived just in time to mix with the equestrians and translating officer, who were giving their morning greeting to the Chief Envoy. I was feeling good, thinking that no one had noticed my absence of last night. I had warned Changbok,

'Don't you breathe a word about it.'

For breakfast, I had a small portion of porridge, and afterwards hurried to Suzhai. Everyone was surprised to see me, except Tian and Li, who were displaying the antiques, and asked,

'Were you tired last night?'

'Regardless of the time of day or night, I am never lethargic.'

Tian suggested,

'Would you like to have a cup of tea?'

I said I would like tea. It was served after a short wait by a handsome young man who told me his name was Fu Youzi, that he was from Shanhaiguan Pass, and was nineteen years old. Tian finished displaying the antiques and asked for my appraisal. There were eleven pieces of porcelain and bronze ware of different sizes and shapes including kettle (or pot), wine vessel (or goblet), cauldron and wine vessel (or sacrificial vessel). Some were big, some small, and others round or angular. The engraving and colouring of each piece was elegant. When I examined their inscriptions (*kuanshi*),²⁹ I noticed they were all products of the Zhou (1122–256 BC) and Han (206 BC–AD 220) dynasties. Tian cautioned against my acceptance at face value,

'It is not necessary for you to verify the pattern. They are newly-inscribed flower patterns, and the porcelain comes from Jinling and Henan Provinces. Though the inscriptions are modelled after the old fashion, the shape lacks the simplicity and the colour lacks the unsophisticated honesty. Therefore, if you put these items next to the real antiques, their vulgarity will be picked up instantly. Though I am physically in the midst of the market shops, my mind always pursues scholarship. When I met you I felt like I had acquired many treasures. How could I cheat you for a second and lose our trust for each other, which may last our lifetime?'

I chose a barrel-shaped three-legged brazier from the collection. It had spearhead-shaped ears and pomegranate-shaped legs. I examined it carefully. It was a reddish-brown colour and struck me as very fine work indeed. I lifted the brazier and examined the bottom of it. On its surface was the inscription, 'Made during the Xuande³⁰ era, Ming dynasty.'

'This looks quite good.'

Tian explained,

'To tell the truth, this also is not a Xuande era product. The brazier was well polished by applying vermilion (sulphide of mercury) to every

nook and cranny. After that, gold powder was kneaded with clay and applied as an overlay. Following a long kiln firing, the brazier turned reddish brown, its present colour. It is not something the average potter can copy.'

I wanted more information,

'Is the reason an antique ware gets cinnabar stain because it has been buried in the ground for such a long time? Is this why an antique dug from a grave is so expensive? If the wares displayed here are newly-made, why do they show such colour?'

'This is something you should know. Usually when an antique ware is buried in the soil, over the centuries it turns blue, and when it is affected by water it turns green. The colour of antique wares dug out from graves has been influenced by the mercury, and possibly by water too. I have heard it said that the colour change is due to the natural energy of the Universe emanating from the corpse, which I do not believe. In ancient times they used to wash the corpse liberally with mercury. Therefore, as the corpse was saturated in mercury, the old wares removed from royal tombs, for instance, have imbued these hues resulting from their contact with mercury. As such, it is easy to distinguish the true antique from the freshly-produced ware and therefore, the genuine one from the imitation. A genuine old ware is uniform in thickness and of course, of good quality throughout, with the main body clear and shiny. The colour associated from its contact with mercury does not normally cover the whole ware, but often only half, or else is limited to any protrusions like ears or legs. Occasionally, however, the influence of the mercury has affected the colour more substantially. Even the blue and green stains can cover one half thickly and the other half only thinly. Sometimes, the stain of one half is translucent and the other half is dull. But even so, the dull part is not so opaque that one could not clearly recognize patterns as fine as hair. Also, the clear part has the glimmering sheen of liquid. Sometimes one comes across artifacts of copper with deep staining, of which the cinnabar stain is considered the most valuable. When the copper ware is buried in the ground for a long time, over the centuries it commonly acquires a mottled pattern of blue, green, even emerald, and sometimes red spots, which reminds people of the mushroom pattern, or sunlight in the clouds, or large flakes of snow. To reach this state, the copper ware is in the ground for more than a thousand years. This is considered a valuable antique. In ancient times,

Emperor Xuanzong (r. 1425–1435) of the Ming dynasty loved the brown colour, and because of this many antique braziers of similar colour have been unearthed.

Lately, potters from Shangxi province made braziers that copied those of the Xuande³¹ period and the resemblance is so remarkable it is hard to tell the imitations from the genuine braziers. However, the Xuande braziers did not have flower patterns, whereas the new ones have them. Thus, the braziers with flower patterns are all imitations. The reason the new wares have identical colouring is that usually after kiln firing the potters inscribe the patterns and date of manufacture by knife. They then dig a hole in the ground and fill the hole with a couple of jars of salt water. When the water is completely absorbed and the wares are dry, they are kept in the ground for a few years before being dug out. They look similar to the ancient wares, but are considered as poor quality, manufactured by potters with inferior skills.

The more ingenious method is the application of a solution of borax, lime, saltpetre, copper sulphate and gold dust, mixed with salt water. The mixture is applied evenly on the pottery with a brush, and then left to dry. After washing the ware several times, the mixture is applied again, and the process is repeated three times a day. A deep hole is dug and a charcoal fire lit in it and nurtured until the temperature gets as hot as a heated brazier. The embers are doused with vinegar, which rapidly dissipates and the hole is then left to dry out. Next, the treated ware is placed in the hole and covered thickly with vinegar dregs. The hole is made watertight with a cover of hardened soil. When the ware is retrieved after four or five days, it has a mottled antique look, with spots of differing colours. The next procedure is to burn bamboo leaves around the ware, and the smoke gives it a bluish hue. It is then rubbed with lead powder. Applying a steel powder and polishing it with a piece of soft lead solder achieves translucency – it simulates the colouring of an antique, as if the ware had been in contact with mercury.

Sometimes an ear or other part of the ware is broken off on purpose, or the body is scarred with a knife, to denote it as a product of the Shang, Zhou, Qin or Han era. It is really pitiful. Later on, should you enter a workshop, you will find that the majority of sellers are from remote places. Please do not become a laughing stock when you buy goods by hesitating, for the reason that you cannot tell the genuine items from the imitations.

My gratitude was heartfelt,

'Thank you very much for your sincerity. I will be leaving for Beijing early tomorrow morning. I would appreciate it if you would write down the way to tell the genuine wares from the imitations, as well as the names of some genuine wares, so that it would be like a lamp to illuminate the dark passage.'

Tian replied,

'If you need it, it is no problem to do that. I will immediately get the reference from *Xiqing Gujian*³² and *Bogun*,³³ and write them neatly with my own views added.'

I promised him I would come back after sunrise, and then returned to my lodging. Breakfast was ready, so after paying my morning respects to the upper chamber, I ate in a hurry. When I rushed out of the lodging, Chōng, who was leaving for sightseeing with Kye-ham and Naewōn, reproved me,

'You seem to go around on your own all the time. Are there any interesting sights to see?'

Naewōn answered for me,

'In fact there isn't a single interesting sight. There is a saying that once upon a time, a scholar from Kwangju County went to Seoul and looked around nervously with his eyes wide open. He was unable to greet the people properly, so he was derided by the citizens. Now we are behaving just like that. To me this is the second time to China, and I am not very interested.'

I met Lord Fei on the street. He dragged me to the Zhanzidian carpet shop, and suggested we meet at Shanlou that night as there was to be a party. I turned down the invitation saying I had an appointment with Tian to meet at the Yisuzai, and all the people who were there last night would meet again, tiresome though it was.

Lord Fei begged me,

'I have talked it over with Tian already. Tian is preparing a party in your honour with Wen. You came to Beijing as a foreign dignitary to recite the poem, Luning,³⁴ at the imperial court; therefore we want to sing you a Baiju song.³⁵ You should understand that. Lord Fei and Wen had already prepared festival food, so please do not turn down our invitation.'

'I have already troubled you a great deal last night, and I would appreciate it if you do not entertain me tonight again.'

Lord Fei spoke at length,

'If there is a beautiful tree in the mountain, a craftsman would want to measure it and assess it for his work. I am visited by a white heron³⁶ from a faraway land, and we both appreciate each other's company. We have forged a genuine friendship of understanding each other's feelings – a friendship that is capable of overlooking each other's mistakes. A genuine friendship is not something predetermined. As the people of the whole world are brothers, there should be no discrimination in selecting one's friend.'

At this juncture, Naewön and his entourage found me and came into the shop. I hurriedly discarded the piece of paper on which I was conversing, and nodded to Fei before leaving the shop. Fei guessed what I meant and nodded back. Kyeham wanted to talk to Fei and was looking for a paper to write on. I stood up first, saying,

'It's not worth talking to him.'

At this negative remark, Kyeham also got up to leave. Fei followed us to the door and gently squeezed my hand to show he understood. I nodded to him once more and left the shop.



GESHANGLOU SILK STORE

That evening it was steaming hot and the sun had a red ring around it. I had my meal in a hurry and went to the upper chamber to spend a few minutes. While leaving the chamber I mumbled to myself,

'I should go to bed early, as I am coughing in this heat.'

I descended to the courtyard and walked back and forth, searching for an excuse to leave at the earliest opportunity. At that moment Naewön, Equerry Chu and Mr No had just finished their meal and were strolling in the courtyard, massaging their stomachs and belching. The moon rose slowly and the noise around the yard had stopped for a second. Equerry Chu was memorizing a seven syllable regulated verse on Liaoyang written by the Deputy Envoy, and at the same time reciting his own work in imitation of the Deputy's poem. I walked up to the hall and coming down quickly, told Mr No,

'My brother (Chief Envoy) looked bored.'

Mr No replied,

'It's true. He looked bored.'

Heading towards the hall, Equerry Chu said, with a concerned expression,

'I am worried he may not be well.'

and also headed to the hall with Naewön following them. Finally I got out of the yard telling Changbok,

'Cover for me like you did yesterday.'

Kyeham happened to come in from outside at that moment, and saw me going out. He enquired,

'Where are you going?'

I said softly,

'Let's follow the moon to somewhere quiet and talk.'

Kyeham asked,

'Where's that?'

'It could be anywhere.'

Kyeham stopped and hesitated to follow me, when the Chief Interpreter turned up, he asked him,

'It is all right to walk about since the moon is so bright, isn't it?'

The Chief Interpreter was alarmed and said something to Kyeham.

Smiling, Kyeham said,

'Of course it is the right way to handle it.'

I also said, without meaning it,

'It sounds the right way to me.'

We went into the house one following the other. When Kyeham and the Interpreter went up to the hall without turning back to see me, I jumped at the opportunity and sneaked out into the street feeling relieved. The heat seemed to have receded and moonlight filled the ground. I went to the Yisuzhai first, only to realize the door was already closed, and Tian was out, leaving Li there alone.

He said,

'Please sit down for a while and have a cup of tea. Tian will be back soon.'

I said,

'I bet everyone is gathered at the Geshanglou already, and anxious to see me.'

'I know all about the beautiful event taking place at the Geshanglou, and I will accompany you there.'

Tian had just returned with a red horn lantern³⁷ and urged me to go. Together with Li we left the shop with pipes in our mouths. The main

road looked as wide as the sky and the moonlight flowed like the ocean. As Tian hooked the lantern on top of the gate, I asked,

'Don't you need the lantern?'

Li said,

'It's not night yet.'

Finally we strolled down to a crossroads. The shops on both side of the street were already closed, with lanterns hooked on the gates. They were mostly blue-coloured lanterns, with others red. People from the Geshanglou were standing in a line under the balcony. They were glad to see me and invited me into the shop. Pei Kuan, Li Guimen, Fei Zhi, Tian Shike, Wen Bogao, Wu Fu and Mu Xiuhuan were all there.

Pei said,

'Lord Pak (Chiwon) is really a trustworthy literati.'

In the centre of the room two fan-shaped lanterns covered with green silk in the middle and red silk at both ends were hung. The two candles on a table were lit, and the food, including fish, meat, salad and fruit, was laid on the table. An extra table was laid under the north-facing wall. They invited me to eat, but I said,

'I am still feeling full of my evening meal.'

Fei poured a cup of tea for me. I noticed a new face among the crowd, and asked his name. He said,

'My name is Ma Heng, courtesy name Yaoru, and I am from Shanhaiguan Pass. I came here for business. I am twenty-three, and I read reasonably well.'

Fei said,

'I think a passage, *wushidiyi* in *Lunyu* (The Analects of Confucius)³⁸ should have been *Zhengbudi*. The reason is that the letter "wu" (五) is a misspelling of the letter "zheng" (正), and the letter "shi" (十) is a misspelling of the letter "bu" (不). It happened by adding another dot inside of "bu" mistakenly. What do you think?'

I said,

'One can suspect the word "*wushi*" (五十) could be "*zu*" (祿), but it is a wild assumption that it may be "*zhengbu*". The *Zhouyi* (The Book of Changes)³⁹ is a book of divination. Even in *Xici*⁴⁰ the words "*shi*" (to divine by stalks of plants) and "*zhan*" (to foretell) appear, but not "*bu*" (fortune telling). The character "*bu*" (不) is made by adding a horizontal stroke to a vertical line, without crossing it.'

Fei said, 'Like the character "ao" (傲 haughty) of *wunuo danshuo*⁴¹ is a misspelling of "ao" (or Ngao 傲 a person's name).⁴² Judging from the following line, *wangshui xingzhou* (to propel a boat on dry land), Danshu and Ao (or Ngao) are two people.'

I replied,

'It is said that Ao propelled a boat on dry land, which is similar to the verse, *wangshui xingzhou*. Though two AOs sound the same, they are completely different characters. Not only that, Ao (or Ngao) lived during the time of King Taikang (2188–2159 BC) of Xia dynasty (2205–1806 BC), which is a different period from that of Emperor Yu Shun⁴³ (2255–2205 BC) we are talking about.'

Li Dongye agreed,

'Your demonstration of proof is perfectly right.'

I asked Tian,

'Have you started to write down the list of antiques I requested?'

He answered,

'Something cropped up during lunch time and I could not finish it. But I am half-way through completion; therefore tomorrow morning if you stop your procession for a second in front of my shop, I will make sure to pass it on to your servant. This time I will not let you down.'

'I am very sorry to trouble you so much.'

'This is nothing between friends. I am rather embarrassed not to have done it earlier.'

I asked,

'Is there anyone here who has been to Qianshan?'

No one had.

'It is over 100 *ri* from here; it is too far for us to visit.'

I asked,

'Does anyone know of Senior Secretary of the Board of Military Affairs, Funing?'

Tian answered,

'We don't know him. He is a literati official in a high government position and we are only merchants. How could we have opportunity to meet him?'

Dongye asked me,

'Will you have an audience with the Emperor this time?'

'Envoy's will have the opportunity to see him occasionally, but I am only an accompaniment on their journey. I am afraid I am not that high in social standing.'

'Last year when the Royal procession made its visit to the Royal tomb, I saw your country's entourage watching the Emperor, by standing next to the Royal carriage. It made us envy them.'

'Why couldn't you look up at the Emperor?'

Pei said,

'We dare not to behave in such an audacious manner. We simply closed the door and kept silent.'

'When the Emperor's procession takes place, don't all the people, adults and children go out of the house and gather in the field to look at the royal procession, vying with each other?'

'How would we dare to do that?'

I asked,

'Among the government's ministers, who do you think is the most popular?'

Dongye was non-committal,

'Their names are listed in the *Man-Han jinshe renzan*.⁴⁴ You may like to browse the book.'

'Even if I browse the directory, how could I find out their biographical details?'

Dongye replied, resignedly,

'As we are buried in the backwoods, we don't know who are Lord Zhou and Lord Zhao⁴⁵ in the Court or who is appointed by divination from a dream.'⁴⁶

I enquired further,

'How many proficient masters of the Confucian classics and well-versed scholars are there in Shengjing?'

Pei said he had never heard of any, but Tian offered some topical information,

'There are several *jurets*⁴⁷ in the Shenyang (Shengjing) Academy, who are in Beijing at the moment to sit for the national examination.'

I kept the subject going,

'It is 1,500 *ri* from here to Beijing. Along that way there must be a great number of famous people and eminent literati. If I knew their names, it would be easy for me to visit them.'

Tian gave a considered reply,

'Beyond the Shanhaiguan Pass is still a frontier district where the land is rough and the people are hard. There are only merchants like us along the route and not many people to name for you to visit. It is tricky to approach strangers, and therefore if I have to name them, they will be my acquaintances only. It will result in currying a favour. Let's say I introduce someone to you, and if he did not meet your high standard of judgment, it would disappoint you and my effort would be in vain.'

By some stroke of fortune, I met a person like you possessed with great virtue, and had the opportunity to enjoy our most illuminating discussions, of which previously I could only dream. This is really a match made in heaven. I think if one can have a true friend in this world, there is nothing else he wants more. I am sure you will meet good people by yourself along the way. I wouldn't dare to introduce someone else.'

While the wine cup was passed around several times, Fei rubbed an ink stone and spread a paper, saying,

'Mu wants to keep your handwriting.'

On hearing this, I immediately wrote down a verse from Pan Tingjun's *qiyue*,⁴⁸ which was written on the occasion of his farewell to Kim Yangbô.⁴⁹ Dongye looked at what I had done and asked,

'Is Pan Tingjun a well-regarded scholar of your country?'

'No, he is not my countryman; he is from Quianang. His courtesy name is Xiangzu, and he is Secretary of the Chancellery of Internal Affairs.'

Pei also got blank paper and asked for my handwriting. With thick ink and a soft brush, the strokes came out beautifully. I could not believe how well it turned out, and the lookers-on were most impressed. As I wrote each page, with each sip of wine the writing got increasingly vigorous. I drew a decrepit pine tree and an oddly shaped stone on some of the pages, which pleased them immensely. Those gathered around me vied with each other, bringing paper and brush, and begged me to write for them. I also drew a black dragon, and shook the brush over the paper, dropping a few blobs of ink to resemble thick clouds and a rain shower. The dorsal fin of the dragon stood upright, though the scales on its body were in disarray, the claws looked bigger than the face and the nose much longer than the horns.⁵⁰ Everyone thought my sketch was bizarre and laughed heartily.

Tian and Ma with their lantern lit, were about to leave ahead of me. 'Why are you leaving before me when we are having such a satisfying and invigorating conversation?'

'I don't want to leave now, but I have to keep my promise that I would finish copying the *Gudonglu* for you. I will bid farewell to you in front of my shop tomorrow morning.'

When I was going to burn the dragon drawing in the candle's flame, Wen got up quickly and grabbed it from me. He folded it carefully and placed it inside his clothing against his chest.

Pei said,

'I am afraid there may be a great drought in the Guangdong region.'

'Why do you think there may be a great drought?'

'Well if this dragon turns into a fire dragon, everyone will suffer.'

At this remark everyone chuckled and Pei had still more to say on the matter,

'There are good dragons, and then there are bad dragons, of which the fire dragon is the most vicious. In the 3rd month (March–April) of Qianlong 8th year a dragon fell out of the sky on to the Liaoyang Plain outside the Shanhaiguan Pass. Though there were no clouds, lightning struck and thunder reverberated. The late spring weather suddenly turned to summer heat around the Pass. For 16 *ri* in any direction (a circumference of one hundred *ri*) the dragon made the earth extremely hot, so that hundreds of people and animals died from dehydration. The travellers and merchants could not go about their business, and day and night the survivors sat unclothed and fanning themselves, trying to stave off the heat. The Emperor ordered several thousand carts of ice from the government warehouses under his control to be distributed to the people to cool themselves. All the trees, soil and stones that were in the vicinity of the dragon turned to mounds of ashes, and water in the wells and springs still boiled.'

Ten days after the dragon descended, a sudden gale swept through the countryside; lightning once more lit the sky and thunder echoed across the heavens. In the rainstorm, the land was drenched with pea-sized raindrops. The houses in Talinghe had caught fire in the maelstrom, but no human or animals suffered harm. When the dragon was trying to leave, people went outside and watched. It lifted its body but dragged its tail, as though it were a camel engaged in standing up. They said that the beast was 3 *kil* long, that it spat fire from its mouth, and kept its tail on the ground.

While the dragon wriggled across the land, each of its dorsal fins caught the lightning flashes, the thunderclaps resounded and the rain

poured down. It finally managed to uncoil itself on an old willow tree branch. It was now over 10 *kil* from the top of its head to the extremity of its posterior claw. The rain poured into the river, filling it almost to the brim, and then stopped. When people looked upwards to the sky; to the east the dragon's horns appeared among the clouds, and its claws could be seen among the clouds in the west. The distance between horns and outermost claw was said to be now several *ri*.

After the dragon ascended, the weather cleared and returned to the more seasonal weather of the 3rd month (March–April). The depression where the dragon had lain turned into a pond of clear water several *kil* long. Half of the trees and stones at the water's edge had been sizzled in the inferno. The burnt hides and bleached bones of horses and cows were there too, and decaying fish of all sizes were piled up, releasing a great stench. People were unable to approach the pond. The most extraordinary thing was that the willow tree, on whose branches the dragon was suspended, was intact and had not lost a single leaf. That year there was a drought in the Guangdong region, and the land was without rain until the 9th month (September–October). The dragon may have played a prank on his departure.'

Everyone was amused by this tall story, while I poured wine into a bowl, drained it quickly, and said,

'That story gives a flavour to the wine.'

All agreed,

'That's quite true. This time we will pass around a bowl of wine to enhance his reputation.'

'Do you know the name of the dragon?'

'It is said that the dragon's name is either Yinglong or Hanba.'

I disagreed,

'No, it is not. He is called Kangch'öl. There is a saying in our country, "Where Kangch'öl passed through, autumn turned to spring." This means there will be a drought, followed by a famine. Because of this, when the indigent people's livelihood fails, they call it Kangch'öl's autumn.'

Pei exclaimed,

'Isn't the dragon's name extraordinary? That is the year I was born. No wonder I am always penniless!'

He pronounced the name as Kangch'ö, and I corrected him,

'No, it is Kangch'öl.'

Pei had another go,

'Kangch'ön.'

I couldn't contain my laughter,

'It is not *ch'ön*. It is *ch'öl* as in *toch'öl*.'

This time Dongye said loudly, with a big smile,

'Kangch'öng.'

That was the end of it, with everyone amused. Generally, the Chinese cannot pronounce the final consonant I such as I in *kad* or as in *wöl*. I said,

'You are all either from Wuxian county or Shu,⁵¹ and came a long way to run your business. Don't you miss home as the years change?'

Wu said he missed his home desperately. Dongye said,

'Whenever I think of home, it is as if my body and spirit get scattered about. I am so far from home, as if at the end of the sky and the remotest corner of the land, where I squabble and scheme for a mean profit. There is only an empty chair in my bedroom, and my young wife lives a solitary life in the women's quarter in spring. Eventually, the letters (*yanshu*)⁵² stop coming, and when you don't dream of love, you can understand why your hair turns white. It is especially hard to bear when the moon is bright, the wind fresh, leaves fall and flowers blossom.'

I was less than sympathetic,

'If that is the case, why don't you plan to go home, till your land, look after your parents, and take care of your wife and children? Instead you are living away from home to chase a miniscule profit. Let's assume that you acquire wealth that is equal to Yidun and Tao Zhu.⁵³ What pleasure would it give you?'

Dongye added thoughtfully to his lamentation, saying that some people were worse off than he:

'Things are not necessarily so. There are some people in our hometown who study under the glow of a firefly, or prod their thighs with a sharp point to chase off sleep. They are so poor that they may only eat rice with salad leaves for breakfast and rice with a pinch of salt for their evening meal. Occasionally, as if someone up in the heavens felt sorry for them, they would gain a minor position in a government office. But it is all the same for them as well, because they also have to go to the corners of the country, as far as 10,000 *77* for their work. When they are faced with a situation where their parent has died, or they have lost their jobs, then their troubles are inconceivable. Not only that, when their final

hour comes, those holding public office have to die where they work. If you are caught in possession of public property, it is the law that you have to surrender not only the stolen goods but also the family business that has been handed down for generations. What good would that do if you are destined for the *huang quan*'s⁵⁴ lament? We don't have much education, which cuts us off from holding a government post. Neither do we have the skills to be artisans. It is all toil and toil. Let's assume we waste our whole lives in agriculture, by reporting to the government every single grain of rice we grow, and not being able to take one step outside the small place where we live from birth to death. It would be just like a summer insect, which could not come out in winter and dies. It would be worse than being dead. People consider me as a lower-class person because I keep a shop and make a living from selling goods.

Be that as it may, for me business means that heaven has opened a door to paradise, and earth has set up Kuaihuolin Festive Forest⁵⁵ where Lord Tao Zhu could float a rowboat, and following Duanmu's⁵⁶ carriage, could go out and about at his leisure, without inhibition. I may go to any big city and live there, as I wish. With the high eaves of the houses, I could relax in a luxurious room and be sheltered from the extreme heat of summer and the severe cold of winter. I could live as a free agent. Therefore, my father would be worry free, and my wife and children would not blame me. Whether you make more profit or less, you have the latitude of mind to forget the glory or shame. When you compare doing business as a livelihood, with the toil of farming or the weariness of government service, it is abundantly clear which is pleasurable and which is painful.

We are kind and sincere with friends. In *Lanyu* the saying is that if three people walk together, without fail one of them is bound to be the leader and if two people unite, they can even melt hard steel. That is the ultimate happiness in this world. If one does not have a friend in his lifetime, there is no pleasure there either. The great man who only knows how to eat and dress does not have an appetite for friendship. In this world there are plenty of mean people who do not speak in everyday language. They have their eyes set only on fine clothing and a full rice bowl, without knowing the pleasure of making friends.'

My reply was short,

'It seems that in China people are engaged in four distinct types of work for reward, and therefore there should be no discrimination between the jobs they do. Because of this people should not be restricted

to a certain class in seeking a marriage partner or finding a position in government service, should they?

Dongye came back with,

'In our country, government officials are not allowed to marry into merchant or artisan families to ensure that the official way of life is untainted. This is to value the cultivation of moral sense, and to look down on commerce. To achieve this they worship the fundamentals and ignore or reject all who are engaged in non-government jobs. My family has been in commerce for generations, and therefore we cannot marry into a ruling-class family. Even if one buys a first-degree licentiate in exchange for rice and money, he cannot be a *juren*,⁵⁷ as he is qualified not by examination but by a recommendation of the local governor.'

Fei said, helpfully:

'Yes, it applies if he tries to sit for the examination in his own home town, but if he tries elsewhere, it does not.'

I asked,

'Are *zhusheng*⁵⁸ treated like first-rare literati?'

Li explained:

'Yes, they are. There are many designations in *zhusheng*, such as *gongsheng*,⁵⁹ *jiansheng*,⁶⁰ *lingsheng*⁶¹ and so forth. These are all selected from *shengyuan*.⁶² Because of this, once you become a *shengyuan* your relatives up to the ninth remove will prosper, but in consequence your neighbours will suffer. The reason is that once you acquire that privilege, it is common to practise high-handedness in the local community. There are high, intermediate and low classes of literati officials. The highest ranking lives off his official salary, the intermediate class opens local Confucian academies and recruits students for their livelihood, and the lowest class begs, in spite of the embarrassment. As the saying goes, "begging for a living results in losing face". Unfortunately, there is not much else you can do about it, because begging is the only way you can survive. Regardless of whether the day is hot or cold, the lower-class literati have to roam around to find someone from whom they can ask a favour, thereby inviting a deplorable situation. Unintentionally, those who used to conduct a stern and lofty discourse suddenly become disliked. There is truth in the saying, "It is best to solve the problem yourself, rather than to ask for favours from others." I can say that while you are engaged in trade, you never reach such a low ebb.'

I wanted to change the subject and asked,

'There must be an unusual *shangzheng*⁶³ in China. We drank for two days – yesterday and today, why don't we have the drinker's wager game?'

Pei wanted to share his knowledge,

'You are talking about ancient *shangzheng*. These days, even insignificant carriage drivers or guards who look after cash boxes can understand that game, which makes it less than special.'

There is a story about a Koryŏ monk's drinking game told by Long Ziyou in Li Yu's⁶⁴ book *Liwen xiaoshi* (Liwen's comedy). A Chinese envoy visited the Koryŏ court and the court asked a monk to organize a party in his honour. The monk initiated a drinking game of riddles by saying, "Xiang Yu and Zhang Liang were arguing about an umbrella. Xiang Yu called it 'umbrella' (*yusan*) and Zhang Liang called it 'parasol' (*liangan*)." The Chinese envoy answered, "Xu You and Chao Cuo argued about a bottle gourd (*bulu*). Xu You said it is *youbulu* and Chao Cuo said it is *chubulu*." Do you know the name of that Koryŏ monk?

I was perplexed,

'There is little reason in what you are saying. I have never heard of the monk's name either.'

Nothing more was said. I had closed my eyes only briefly since cock's crow, and when I heard a noise outside the house, I got up and returned to my lodge. The day had not yet broken, so I took off my clothing and went to bed again until breakfast was announced.



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The weather had cleared after the drizzle. We rode 3 *ri* from Shenyang to Yuanang, 10 *ri* to Tayuan, 2 *ri* to Fengshicun, 1 *ri* to Zhuangyuan Bridge, 14 *ri* to Yongan Bridge. From Yongan Bridge the road improved and we rode a further 5 *ri* to Shuangjia zi, 10 *ri* to Dafangshen. This was a total of 45 *ri* for the morning, and we had lunch in Dafangshen.

Leaving Dafangshen, we rode 5 *ri* to Modao qiao, 10 *ri* to Biancheng, 12 *ri* to Xinglong dian, 13 *ri* to Gujiazi, in all 40 *ri*, making 85 *ri* for the day.

We stayed overnight in Gujiazi. Next morning we left Shenyang (Shengjing) and stopped at Geshanglou on our way, where Pei met us alone. He said Wen was still in a deep sleep. I waved goodbye to Pei and

rode on to Yisuzhai, where Tian and Fei were waiting. Tian showed me two sealed letters, one of which was a list of antiques he had prepared for me. The other was written on red paper and addressed,

'To Taishi⁶⁵ Xu Taicun.'

Tian explained,

'I sincerely wish you to deliver this letter to Xu Taishi, although I feel slightly awkward to ask you. The Korea House is next to Shujishi guan.⁶⁶ Please deliver it on the day you arrive in Beijing. When you meet Xu Taishi you will immediately realize that he is a gentleman and an extraordinarily versed person, yet very humble. He will be delighted to see you. I have already introduced you in detail, with your distinguished name and great personality I don't think you would waste your time to see him.'

'I am sad to leave without saying farewell to all of you. Please give my regards to those I have not seen today.'

Tian nodded his head. When I was about to get up and leave, he said, 'Here is Mu.'

Mu was accompanied by a young man with a basket of grapes that he had brought for me. He bowed politely and came forward to hold my hand in a very affectionate way as if he had known me for some time. But I was rushed and had to leave with just a wave of hand. When I mounted my horse the young man came to the horse's head and lifted the basket up for me. I took a bunch of the grapes, thanked him, waved again and rode off. After a short while, I turned around in the saddle to find the group still standing there in front of the shop to see me off. In my rush to leave I regretted not asking the young man's name.

As I had messed up my sleep for two consecutive nights, and the day-break compounded my fatigue, I asked Ch'angdae to take the rein, and hold me firmly with Changbok, at each side of my horse. I stole a sweet nap in the saddle and awoke quite refreshed. The surrounding countryside looked sharper and fresher than before. Changbok said,

'While you were asleep a Mongolian driving two camels passed by.'

'Why didn't you let me know?'

Then Ch'angdae remarked,

'You were snoring like thunder, and we tried hard to wake you without success. It was the first time for us to see them to be sure, but I think they were camels.'

'What did they look like?'

Ch'angdae had observed the animals quite closely,

'It's bit difficult to describe. But it wasn't a horse as its hoofs were cloven, and its tail was like that of an ox, but it did not have an ox's horns. Its face was like a goat's, but its fur was not curly. It had two humps spurring out of its back and on top of that, when it lifted its head, it looked like a goose. Its eyes were open, but like those of a blind person whose eyes looked perfect, and yet unable to see.'

'Indeed, it seems you have seen a camel. Tell me, how big was the animal?'

Ch'angdae pointed at a detritus wall, which was about a *ki* high and said it was about the same height. I admonished him, saying the next time he saw something new, he should let me know, even though I was sleeping, or in the middle of a meal.

The diminishing light of the setting sun reflected on my horse's mane, while nearby several hundred donkeys drank their fill at the river's edge. An old woman drove her donkey with a kaoliang stick in her hand, and a boy of about seven or eight years followed in her tracks. The woman wore a green short skirt and black shoes, and was obviously a countrywoman. She had lost much of her hair and her pate was smooth and as shiny as a gourd dipper. Just beneath the crown she had tied her remaining hair up into a tiny chignon, not more than one *chi* long, in which she had inserted a variety of flowers in considerable quantity. She stopped and asked Changbok for a Korean cigarette.

I enquired,

'Do you breed all those donkeys at your place?'

She nodded and left without saying anything. I was unsure whether she had understood my question.



LIST OF ANTIQUES

Wenwang⁶⁷ ding, Zhao fu ding and Yahufu ding. These three double-eared bronze circular cauldrons (ding) are of excellent quality and were made during the Shang (1700–1027 BC) and Zhou (1027–771 BC) dynasties. Zhouwangbo ding, Dantu ding, and Zhoufeng ding. These are Tang dynasty products made during the reign of Tianpao (742–755). These small cauldrons would be ideal for ornamental use, such as in a study room.

Shangfuyi ding, Fusi ding, Fugui ding, Shangzi ding, Bingzhong ding, Taotie ding, Lifu ding, Shangyu ding, Shangyimao ding and Fujia ding.

These items are Kang Nangia's reproductions of cauldrons produced during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368).

Zhoudashu ding, Zhouluan ding.

I point out that some of the cauldrons (ding) you will see for sale have various defects, such as chicken-sized legs and ring-shaped ears, with body scratches, and damage to the mouth. They are of little interest and not worth buying.

Zhoushiwang dun,⁶⁸ Si dun, Yi dun, Shangmuyi li,⁶⁹ Zhouniceao li, Shangshou yi⁷⁰ and Zhouxin yi.

The above items are all listed in the Bogutu catalogue. Details of physical appearance, measurement, inscriptional contents and decorative designs are more carefully recorded and classified in the recent transcription, *Xi Qing Gujian*.⁷¹ Therefore please go to a bookshop, find the *Xi Qing Gujian* catalogue and check the names and illustrations of ceramic wares to find the designs, appearance, etc. On market day, I went to Liulichang Antique Street, and temples such as Longfu si Temple and Hongren si Temple, and found the pottery there of excellent quality.

Gu, Zun and Zhi

These three receptacles are all drinking cups that could be used also as flower vases in a quiet room, which you would appreciate.

Guanyao⁷² ware and Geyao⁷³ ware are very comparable; they were both made in a similar variety of forms and sizes using a similar technique. The blue and white, and the yellow glazed are highly esteemed. They have a flowing, moist and smooth sheen. The greyish blue and the ivory white glazed pieces are not valued at all. As to the pattern, the crushed ice and the eel pattern are the more valuable. The thinly crushed pattern is low-quality ware. As for the technique used in the making of these wares, it is all described in the Bogutu catalogue. But be it cauldron, brazier, bottle, crane or drinking vessel, if it is short and fat-bellied, then it is inferior and a low-quality product. That is not good for aesthetic appreciation, and so please do not bother to purchase such a piece.

I opened Tian's letter and read:

Last winter, I visited Beijing for the first time and returned home in February. While I was in Beijing I went to Liulichang Antique Street every day, and everything I saw looked so precious and rare it was beyond description. I was awestricken at the time like a country bumpkin, who saw the grandeur of a big city building for the first time.

Those deplorable, irresponsible youngsters of the Jinchang (Suzhou) region, who crawl and jump like lice and fleas, crowd the Liulichang, and set prices recklessly ten times above the real value. They bewitch even the hardened buyers with their sweet talk.

Being there for the first time I was frightened and at the same time dazed. My Three Senses⁷⁴ were unbalanced, and my Five Vital Organs⁷⁵ were in turmoil. After that first experience I came home totally bewildered, without making any profit. When I recall that incident my hair stands on end. Why do you think I feel this way? It is because being brought up in the countryside, I was merely a humble but foolish country bumpkin. I could not help it that I mistook a roof tile for a precious stone, or being unable to tell the difference between a fish eye and a pearl. However, I feel very resentful of the fact that I became a laughing stock, after paying so much for useless objects, and for helping those thieves fatten their bellies.

The reason I am telling you these insignificant little matters is because I am worried that a foreign gentleman like you goes to Beijing, talks with antique dealers and perhaps buys some wares, and when you return home eventually, on realizing your mistake tell your countrymen that there was not a single honest man in China. I also feel that I have to tell you the truth about my ability to appreciate old paintings and calligraphies. It is difficult to recommend those art works to you, as I am not very fond of old paintings, nor do I have a comprehensive knowledge of them.

Generally, the artworks you see in the streets where antiques are sold are not old paintings and calligraphies produced with masterly skills, but the reworking of early masterpieces by later generations. Yet one can see a glancing similarity with original masterpieces by such artists as Mi Fu,⁷⁶ Cai Jing,⁷⁷ Su Shi⁷⁸ and Huang Tingjian.⁷⁹ A while ago, despite my obvious imprudence, you asked me if I knew someone you could meet along your way. My advice is that even if you come across a worthwhile person, you would be in too much of a hurry to try to discuss anything deeply. Also, it would not be an easy task to search out such a person. When I was in Beijing last time, I met Taishi Xu Zhaodang. We

became friends over a few days and promised each other to remain friends. His pseudonym is Taicun, and he is from Hebei. Here is a letter addressed to him. Please go to Hanlin Graduate House when you arrive in Beijing, and explain that the letter is from me.

If he understands that you and I are very good friends, I am sure he will treat you nicely. He is an honest man and when you see him you will like him. You will find out soon that I haven't made a mistake by introducing you to him. I believe you understand what I mean.'



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A fine day but with a strong wind blowing. We left Gujiazzi early morning and rode 8 *ri* to Juluhe (also called Zhouluhe). From there 7 *ri* to Juluhe bao, 3 *ri* to Midianzi, 2 *ri* to Wuduhe, 5 *ri* to Sifantai, 3 *ri* to Guojiarun, 3 *ri* to Ximintun, 4 *ri* to Xiaohuangqi bao, where we had lunch, making a total of 35 *ri*. In the afternoon we rode 8 *ri* from Xiaohuangqi bao to Dahuangqi bao, 12 *ri* to Linhegou, 12 *ri* to Shishizi, 10 *ri* to Yingfang, 10 *ri* to Baigibao, a total 52 *ri*. Today we rode a total of 87 *ri*. We stayed overnight at Baigibao.

I woke at dawn and washed, but still felt very tired. The moonlight had waned, the stars that still studded the early morning sky twinkled, and the village cocks crowed one after the other. Not long after we started the day's journey, a ground mist set in and turned the wide plain into a silver ocean. A group of merchants from Ujia passed us chatting away; but I could see them only dimly. I could not comprehend their conversation and I thought it resembled a dream where the dreamer is reading an unusual story. The wondrous atmosphere of the morning was beyond description.

Before long the mist cleared and with a bright sky, cicadas started their ceaseless chirping from the vicinity of the numerous roadside willow trees. Even if those cicadas had not warned us like that, we had already guessed the day would be scorching hot. A flag hoisted in front of an ancestral shrine looked like a sail. When I turned to the eastern sky I saw red clouds, and the rising sun from the opposite side of a cornfield expanded to fill the whole of Liaodong plain with its brilliant light. In the distance, horses, carts, trees, and houses as tiny as hairs and feathers were slowly revealed by the sunlight.

The streets of Ximintun, brimful of shops, were as busy as anything I had seen in Liaodong. I went to a pawnshop, where I saw a wall-shelf overgrown with grape vine that gave a lucid green light to the garden. In the centre stood a mound of rare stones piled one on top of the other. In front of the stones a jar of about one *kil* deep was buried, in which several lotus flowers blossomed. A wooden barrel had been buried, too, which was home to a breeding pair of waterfowl. Surrounding the stone mound were many plant pots in which palms, roses and pomegranates were growing. Five or six imposing men, seated on a neat row of chairs under a curtain screen, got up when they saw me, bowed and asked me to sit down, then offered me a cool cup of tea.

The owner of the shop fetched two sheets of red paper, which had a motif of two dragons in a milky gold colour, and asked me to write a verse couplet. Without hesitation I wrote:

A pair of mandarin duck, bathing like flying silk,
Fresh lotus blossom resembles a silent immortal.

Those who were watching over my shoulder praised my writing. The shop owner said,

'Please wait for a minute. I am going to bring some better paper.'

Soon afterwards he appeared with paper in his left hand and a small cup that contained thick ink in his right. He then cut the pulp paper (rough printing paper) into a 3 *cha* length, and asked me to write in a size suitable for a frame which could be hung on the shop door. Along my journey I had seen scrolls on the side posts of shop doors that read, '*Qishuang saixue*' (whiter than white frost and can wager on the snow). These scrolls always attracted my attention. I wondered if the merchants were trying to prove that they were as honest as white frost and as pure as the driven snow! It suddenly occurred to me that a few days ago when we passed through Lannibao I again noticed these four letters on the side post of a shop, the handwriting of which I found extraordinary. I had halted my horse for a while and pondered over the writing. I was sure its style was that of Mei Fu and so I thought I would write in his style.

First, I dipped the tip of the brush in the ink, and then lifted it up and down until the lighter and darker colours of the ink were evenly absorbed into the brush. I then spread the sheet of paper and started to

write from left to right, with the character for snow (*xue* 雪) first. Of course, my writing might have been nowhere near that of Mei Fu, but I was confident it equalled that of Dong Quichang (1555–1636).⁸⁰ The number of spectators grew, and they applauded my effort, saying in unison that my writing was extraordinary. Next, I wrote the character for surpass (*sai* 賽), which got some praise, but the shop owner did not look as happy as he had been with my earlier writing. I had some misgiving as I had never used the letter *sai* in my writing before this, and I may have written the top radical too tightly, while the bottom stroke dragged too long for the shopkeeper's liking. On top of this a thick blob of ink fell from my brush on to the left side of the paper and slowly spread into a shape that resembled a mottled leopard. This probably made him disgruntled with my work. Nevertheless, I continued and wrote the characters for frost (*shuang* 霜) and for deceive (*yi* 欺) in one go. After that I put the brush down and scrutinized my writing, and had no qualms about the quality of the four characters I had written. But the owner of the shop shook his head and said,

'This has nothing to do with us.'

I got up and left, after asking them to keep it. Of course, one cannot compare these merchants in such out of the way places as this with their counterparts in Shenyang. I talked myself out of contemplating if the shopkeeper would know if my writing was credible or not.

This morning after sun-up, a strong gale blew as if it was going to blow the whole world away, but in the afternoon it calmed. It had become very hot and humid, which we had to endure without a breath of wind.

We crossed the Yongangqiao Bridge, a structure built by criss-crossed timber planks, thicker than a man's arm and with a height of about 2 *chang*, and a width of about 5 *chang*. Both ends of the beams were as if cut to measure and so perfectly matched. In a channel under the bridge, clear blue water was flowing ceaselessly, which gave the muddy plain adjoining a glossy appearance. If this land were cultivated as paddy fields, many thousand sacks of rice could be harvested. However, some people say there are two possible reasons why this fertile land has never been farmed.

The first may be that Emperor Kangxi recommended publication of *Gengzhin* (Illustrations of Ploughing and Weaving)⁸¹ and *Nongzheng quanishu* (the Comprehensive Treatises on Agriculture), and the present emperor, Emperor Qianlong (r. 1735–1796), who comes from genera-

tions of farming families, must be aware that this extremely fertile land would make first-rate fields. But the land, which is outside of Shanhaiguan Pass, is Manchurian territory, where the Qing dynasty arose.

The second may be that the rice grain harvested from this fertile land would be fat and well flavoured. When cooked, this white rice would be luscious. Thus, if the ordinary people were fed with such fine rice all the time, their muscles would become flabby and their bones would become soft. On the other hand, a staple diet of kaoliang and millet is thought to harden and strengthen the body because these cereal grains do not satisfy the persevering hunger. So the people would not know the luxurious taste of fat white rice that makes for full stomachs. Therefore, those who govern the country have chosen to abandon this fertile land of 1000 *ri*, and have encouraged the people to live in a windswept land in order for them to strive unceasingly for the righteousness of the country. This really is an ingenious scheme.

Along the way, I noticed that at every second or third *ri* we travelled was a settlement of country cottages, with numerous horses and carriages coming and going. The shops on both side of the road were quite impressive too. Though there were differences, from the more luxurious to the more modest, all in all the scale of the buildings was the same. Occasionally, something really surprising and pleasant caught my eye, but I don't think I can record here everything I saw.

The day had drawn to a close, and while watching the distant smoke I urged my horse to the rest station. An old woman came out of a melon field and prostrated herself in front of my horse. Pointing at a thatched house of about 3 or 4 *kun*, she said:

'This old woman is earning a living by selling melons on the street. A while ago, forty or fifty of your countrymen stopped here to rest, and bought my melons at first. Then, when they were about to leave, they took a melon each without paying and ran away, screaming.'

'Why didn't you complain to the leader?'

The old woman said, weeping,

'Of course I did. But the man pretended to be deaf and mute. How could I handle forty or fifty strong men on my own? When I chased one man, he stood in my way and hit me so hard on my face with the melon that I had lightning in my eyes, and the juice of that melon on my face hasn't even dried yet.'

She kept on asking for an energy pill. I said I did not have any such pills. She then hugged Ch'angdae and begged him to buy her melons, presenting five melons in front of him.

I happened to be thirsty at the time, so I tried a melon. It had an unusually good flavour and was extremely sweet. I told Ch'angdae to buy the remaining four so that we could take them with us and eat them that night. I also asked Ch'angdae and Changbok to eat two each. So in all we bought nine melons, but the old woman insisted we pay eighty *wen*. Ch'angdae gave her fifty *wen*, at which she got quite angry and refused to accept the money. When Ch'angdae and Changbok emptied their pockets and found seventy-one *wen*, we decided to pay all of it. I got on the horse first, telling Ch'angdae to pay her, and only when he showed the old woman his empty pocket, did she accept the amount offered. It was lamentable that this obstinate old woman sold us nine melons for almost one hundred *wen* (coin), with a sad countenance and tears running down her cheeks. It was even worse that the servants of our entourage had behaved so badly on the road.

We reached the station after sunset. After dinner, I offered the melons to Naewön and Kyeham as dessert, and told them what our servants had done by snatching the melons from the old woman without paying. This was countered by many of the horse drivers:

'No such thing happened. That old woman, who lives in an isolated farmhouse and sells melons, is extremely crafty. When she saw you travelling apart from the main group, she pretended to be sad so that she could extract an energy pill from you.'

I suddenly realized I had been cheated, and was quite resentful. I could not comprehend how the old woman could turn on so many tears in an instant. Shidae had the last word:

'I think she is a Chinese, as Manchurians are neither that crafty nor as wickedly behaved as that.'

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The unpromising early morning had turned into a fine day. We rode 12 *ri* from Baiqi bao to Xiaobaqi bao, 6 *ri* to Pingfan, 12 *ri* to Yibanla men, which is also called Yibanmen. From Yibanmen 8 *ri* to Kaoshan tun, 12 *ri* to Erdaojing, where we had lunch. The morning's ride was 50 *ri*. After lunch we rode 8 *ri* from Erdaojing to Yinjishi, 22 *ri* to Guijiapu, where

the bridge ends. We then rode a short 1 *ri* to Gujingzi, 9 *ri* to Shigangzi 2 *ri* to Yantai, 4 *ri* to Xiaohai shan, altogether 46 *ri*. Today we rode 96 *ri* and stayed at Xiaohai shan.

Being nearly the last of the dog days, it was streaming hot. A party had left early in the morning to ride to the next station, which was far away. Pyön and I had left early, too. Yesterday, while on the road we talked about watching the sunrise, and tried to make sure to do it today. But at sunrise clouds and fog covered the eastern sky, and the sight was no better than yesterday. By the time the sun had risen 1 *kil* high, the clouds below had become became golden dragons that jumped up, soared and wiggled. They were so elusive to the onlooker, with their constantly changing shapes. While we looked, the sun had risen slowly to be almost overhead.

From the time we left Liaoning, we had seen many small cities and lakes, too many to begin to describe. There is a saying, 'Every 3 *ri* there is a walled city and every 5 *ri* an outer wall of a city.' This does not mean there is always a county or town office within them. It simply means a country settlement. But the administrative arrangement is the same. As both Yibanmen and Erdaojing are in low lying wetland, even a small amount of rain turns the marshy ground into a dangerous swamp. In spring when the ice melts, if a man or a horse fell accidentally into the swamp, in no time at all they would disappear beyond help, even though within touching distance. Last spring, about twenty traders from Shanxi and two of our countrymen, all of whom were riding healthy donkeys to Yibanmen, fell into the swamp and were drowned altogether. In *Tangshu* (History of the Tang dynasty) it is written:

Emperor Taizong, having failed in battle to conquer the Koguryō, retreated. When he reached Bocuoshui, due to the swamp which spanned as far as 80 *ri*, the carriages could not pass through. Yang Shidao (d. 647)⁸² and Commander-in-chief Zhangsun Wuji (d. 659),⁸³ leading an army of ten thousand men, felled the trees, laid the road, and built the bridge by joining the carriages together. During this operation, Taizong himself is said to have helped carry the timbers on his horse's back.

I could not find out where Bocuoshui is located. I know, however, that up to one thousand *ri* of swamp in Liaodong has earth as soft as

Chinese ink cake. The rain turns the ground into a kind of sweet sticky dough, so that if a man put a foot only slightly wrong, he would fall into the dough up to his knees and even to his waist. Should he manage to get one leg out, the other leg would be sucked down even deeper, as if something was pulling him under. If he could not struggle free quickly, his whole body would be devoured by the swamp without a trace.

Nowadays, there is frequent traffic of people from the Qing dynasty court to Shengjing. A bridge was built to limit the danger by laying platted timber logs, starting at Yönganqiao bridge and continuing until it reached the Gujiapu in one stretch of about 200 *z*. Not only the great quantity of materials it required, but also the 200 *z* long timber bridge was so evenly laid, with the timber edges perfectly sliced, that it looked like two clean painted lines. One can imagine the ingenuity of their workmanship. This fine quality is also reflected in objects made for everyday use. It must be what Hong Taeyong (1731–1783)⁸⁴ meant in his writing,

'We cannot compete with the way the Chinese mind works.'

Routine repair of the bridge is carried out every third year. On reflection, when I think of Bocuoshui in *Tangshu* (History of Tang dynasty) it must mean the area between Yihannan and Erdaojiang.

Now and then, from Yahuguan onward, I saw a tall white tablet pavilion in the streets, which I thought signified a house in mourning. This was built from reeds, but the imitation of the roof tiles and the ornament on the roof (to protect it against fire), looked the same as the real things in the house in which the mourners lived. The pavilion was about 4 or 5 *kil* high, and built about ten paces from the mourners' house. At one house, in front of the pavilion, several musicians were playing. Whenever mourners arrived, regardless of the hour, the musicians played a pair of small cymbals, a flute and tambourine very loudly. Only when the sacrificial meal was offered to the deceased and a rite performed, with sounds of keening heard from inside the house, did the musicians outside play in harmony.

When I reached Shigangzi, I rested for a short while, and looked around the street, with Chöng and Pyön. We went to a tablet pavilion, similarly built with reeds, to watch the mourning custom more closely. When we arrived, the music was being played very loudly and discordantly. Startled by the noise Chöng and Pyön fled in a flurry, plugging their ears. Also worried about losing my hearing, I waved my hands and

asked the musicians to stop, which they completely ignored. They kept on blowing and banging their instruments, occasionally glancing at me sideways. As I had become so interested in what I had previously observed at a distance, I went to the front gate. The principal mourner ran out of the house and approached me, wept profusely and after throwing down a bamboo stick, bowed twice.

When he bowed, his head touched the ground and when he got up, tears ran down his face, and all the while stamping his feet. His crying didn't stop and he exclaimed:

'It happened so suddenly I don't know what to do.'

The principal mourner was followed by several other mourners, all wearing white hempen hoods. They helped me into the house, holding my arms, and the principal mourner, who had now stopped the lamentation, also followed us inside. Just at that time I bumped into Erong, our dry-provisions dispenser, who was coming out of the house. I was so relieved to see him that I asked him hurriedly what I was supposed to do. He replied,

'The deceased person was my good friend for a long time as he was the same age as I am. So I have made a call of condolence to his wife.'

I asked him,

'How does one make condolence?'

'Please hold the hands of the principal mourner and say,

'I heard your lord has passed away.'

After telling me this he turned and followed me into the house, advising me,

'I am afraid you have to make a donation for funeral expenses, and I will look into it, Sir.'

They had built a big hut of reeds in front of the hall, which looked quite out of the ordinary. In the yard a linen tent had been erected, and a large number of relatives were inside. Erong said,

'The owner of the house will bring wine and fruit. Please stay on a little longer, and have some of it. It would be quite rude not to do so, Sir.'

'Now that I am here, it is worthwhile to see the custom, but it would be painful to make a condolence to the principal mourner.'

'You have already made a condolence and it would be unnecessary to do more.'

He pointed at the reed hut, saying,

'This is the funeral parlour. The male and female mourners move into this parlour leaving the house empty. Inside it, every seat is allocated according to the traditional regulations concerning mourning,⁸⁵ such as *giniangfu* (for twelve months mourning), *dagongfu* (for nine months mourning) and *xiaogongfu* (for five months mourning). After the funeral is finished they return to their homes.'

Occasionally, a young woman struck her head out of the hut and looked around. She wore a white hempen cloth over her head, and was rather a beautiful looking woman. Ertrong pointed at her and said,

'That lady is a daughter of the deceased, whose husband is a wealthy merchant, and lives in the Shanhaiguan Pass.'

The principal mourner came out of the mourners' tent and sat on a chair. The mourners with the hempen hoods brought out two bowls of noodles, a tray each of fruits, bean curds, salad, two cups of tea, and a kettle of wine, and laid them on the table. They also put three empty cups in front of me, and then placed another chair on the opposite side of the table. They had arranged the three cups neatly in front of us, and asked Ertrong to sit down as well. Ertrong refused firmly, saying he would not dare to do so in front of his lord and master, and immediately left the hut. He came back shortly with a scroll of white paper and a single paper money and put them front of the principal mourner, saying that it was a gift for funeral expenses from me. The principal mourner got up from his chair, and thanked me with a deep bow.

I half-heartedly ate some salad and fruit, but soon got up and left the hut. The principal mourner followed me to the gate and saw me off. In the servants' quarter a horse made of bamboo was being pasted with paper. In the meantime, the envoy's entourage had reached here, and was resting. Soon afterwards, the Deputy Envoy arrived. He had alighted from his carriage a little way back along the road. When I told the group about how I had made my condolence to the principal mourner, they were highly amused, for some reason.

Erdaojing was a bustling city and although its Yinjisi Temple was magnificent, it was in a state of decay. The memorial stone was inscribed with the names of many Koreans who had made donations to the temple. I assumed they were Korean traders from Üjiu. For the first time I had a glimpse of the peak of Yiwulu shan Mountain, which stretched north-west as far as the eye could see. It looked like it was draped with

a green screen. Since crossing the Hunhe River we have crossed five other rivers, on each occasion by boat. The Yantai (Chefoo)⁸⁶ starts from here, and at 5 *ri* intervals we saw a lookout with a circumference of about 10 *li*, and several *kelin* in height. The lookouts are built in the same way as those of the Great Wall, with a bartlement and embrasure. This is what they call Babaawang (eight hundred lookout) built by Nangong Qi Jiguang.⁸⁷ In contrast to Yiwulu shan, Xiaohei shan Mountain is a slight bump like a clasped fist, small and level as if pressed down on a plain, thereby acquiring the name Xiaohei.

The houses in Erdaojing almost touched each other, and the shops were bustling with people, just like those in Ximintun. We saw an uncountable number, perhaps some thousands, of horses, cows, sheep and mules in the middle of the green plain. Erdaojing could be considered as a big place by any description.

It is customary for the servants of the entourage to comfort each other for the hardship they endured during the long journey. This takes place over a repast of one whole boiled pig. Changbok and Ch'angdae announced they would also go in the evening and dine on it.

When the moon came up, it was as bright as day and the heat had already receded. After dinner I went out and gazed at the plain, a long distance away. A blue river wound its way through the land, and from where I stood I saw the cows and sheep heading for home. The shops were still open so I went into one of them. In the middle of the courtyard the cross-pole shelves were set up high. They were covered with a river-reed blind, which let the moonlight in when a string hanging below was pulled. Rare flowers were entwined around the blind and could be seen clearly in the moonlight. Some people idling on the street had followed me into the shop and soon filled the courtyard.

I went further through the front gate, which had two posts and a roof. The inner courtyard was as big as a front yard and underneath the railing green banana plants grew. Four men sat around a table, and one of them had written '*Xinqiu qingshang* (Celebration of New Autumn)' in burgundy-coloured ink on a piece of red paper. The moonlight shone on it, but I could not see it clearly, although by the look of the writing I could tell he was not skilled with the brush. I thought this might be the opportunity where I could boast my skill against his poor penmanship. A crowd of people watched his writing, competing with each other to get a better view and when finished the paper was put on the side post

of the middle door in the main hall. It was a notice to the public announcing the celebration of the moon festival.

I saw that the writing materials had been left on the table, so I went over and sat down. I dipped the brush generously into the left over ink, and scribbled in large letters *Xinqui qingshang*, without a thought whether my behaviour was right or wrong. One of the men shouted to the crowd and they all came and surrounded the table. In the commotion of laughter and talk, one said,

'This Korean man is really an excellent writer!'

Another, amazed, said,

'*Dongyi*⁸⁸ (Eastern foreigner) has the same characters as we have.'

I heard the remark and the reply,

'Although they use the same characters, their pronunciation is different.'

I put the brush down and got up to go. Many of them held on to my hands and one said,

'Please sit down for a while. To whom am I talking, Sir?'

I wrote my name and showed the paper to them, at which they were even more pleased. When I first came into the shop they had not welcomed me, and even worse ignored me altogether. But after they saw my writing, they over-reacted, by bringing me a cup of tea hurriedly, and lighting a cigarette for me. Their attitude had changed completely.

The men were from Fenjin in Taiyuan, and came here last year to open a jewellery shop, which sells hairpins, wristbands, ear-rings, rings, and similar adornments. The shop was called Wancuitang, and of the five owners three had the surname of Cui, and the other two were Liu and Guo. Their writing, except that of Guo, was despicable. All five men looked to be just over thirty and healthy as mules, of fair countenance and with affectionate eyes, but lacking in elegance. They were quite different from the people I had met earlier, from Wuxian county and Shu. You can see the marked difference between each locality, which leads you to understand why so many generals come from Shanxi.⁸⁹

I asked Guo,

'You said you are from Taiyuan. Do you know a person called Guo Taifeng with the pen-name of Jinna?'

'I do not know him.'

Pointing at two different characters with the same sound he said, 'His name is Guo, of Guo Taizu⁹⁰ and mine is Guo of Huo Qubing,' I replied, laughing,

'Why don't you refer to Fenyang⁹¹ and Bolu,⁹² instead of identifying your surname with Emperor Taizu and Piaoyao?'⁹³

Guo was silent. He might have thought I was unable to differentiate between two characters and had confused them. After a while he asked,

'How do you come through here if you have landed on Dengzhou?'

'I didn't land there. We are travelling 3,000 *ri* overland, straight to Beijing.'

'Is Korea the same as Japan?'

Just at that moment a sheet of red paper was put on the table and I was asked to write something. The man called to his colleagues, and an increasing number of people surrounded the table. I complained,

'The red paper is not good for writing. Please bring me some egg-coloured paper.'

Someone dashed out of the room and brought several sheets of white paper. I tore off a piece, and wrote a couplet on it:

This old man enjoys the woodland.

Have you really understood the water and the moon?⁹⁴

Everybody shouted joyfully. They were busy rubbing the ink stone and looking for a suitable sheet of paper. I spread out the paper before me and wrote without stopping, like writing a legal accusation file. Someone asked,

'Do you drink, Sir?'

'I wouldn't refuse a cup of wine.'

At my reply they laughed heartily and soon a kettle of hot wine was brought in. They offered me three cups of wine, in quick succession. I asked the owner of the shop,

'Why don't you drink?'

'None of us drink, Sir.'

People brought apples, crab apples and grapes, competing with each other, and offered them to me. I said,

'Though the moonlight is bright, it inhibits my writing. I would like to have a candle lit.'

Guo observed,

'Isn't one mirror in the sky better than ten thousand mirrors of the human world?'

Another asked,
'Is your lordship's eyesight bad?'

I said it was. Soon four candles were lit. I remembered that yesterday when I wrote *Qishuang saixue* (Soft as frost and white as snow), the owner of that shop suddenly showed his distaste. Today I am determined to write it again, but better, to wipe out that embarrassment. I asked,

'What do you think of me writing for your signboard?'

They all agreed, saying,

'That would be excellent.'

When I had finished writing *Qishuang saixue*, the reaction was the same as yesterday. I asked,

'Is this of no relevance to your shop?'

They said, reluctantly,

'No, Sir.'

Guo was more forthcoming,

'Our shop sells only ladies head-ornaments, and is not a noodle shop.'

I finally understood the mistake I had been making, and was rather embarrassed. With tongue in cheek, I told an untruth,

'I knew that, but just for fun I thought I would write it.'

Earlier, in Liaoning, I remembered seeing a signboard with the words *Jinming fujia* (Jinming Head-ornaments: combs and wears an ornamental hairpin when the rooster crows) written in gold, and so I thought that *Fujiatang* (Head-ornaments Hall) would be a fitting description for the shop. So I decided to write *Fujiatang*. They admired my work, occasionally uttering an emotional 'Ah!'

Guo asked,

'What does this trade name mean?'

I explained it,

'As your shop trades in ladies hair-ornaments, I quoted a line that describes a lady wearing her hairpin with intricate ornaments, from *Shijing* (Book of Songs).'

Guo was deeply moved and said,

'I don't know how to repay you for awarding such an honour to my shop.'

As I planned to visit Beizhen Temple the following day, I returned early to the lodge. When I told our entourage what had happened earlier, they laughed their heads off. After that, whenever I saw the

four characters for *Qishuang saixue* on a shop front I knew it was a noodle shop. This does not mean 'a mind as pure and white as snow', but, 'the wheat flour is light as the touch of frost, and as white as snow'. Ch'öngyö, Cho Taitong and I agreed to go to Beizhen Temple tomorrow.



VISITING TEMPLES IN SHENGJING

Shengci Temple was built in the Chingde 2nd year. The temple building is majestic and luxurious. The sermon hall is built on elevated ground one *kil* high, and surrounded by a stone railing. Under the eaves a net is stretched tightly to prevent sparrows nesting. The branches of the three pine trees in the yard are entangled, and cast a dark green shadow.

There are two stone monuments, one of which has the inscription of Imperial College graduate Ganglin on its front, and Manchurian writing on its back. The other monument has Mongolian and Tibetan writing on both front and back. Two lamas⁹⁵ guard the temple at its entrance. There are eight hundred statues of Buddha's disciples inside the hall. They are not more than a few *ch'i* high, and are exquisitely made. There are also several hundred dice-sized models of pagodas, which Emperor Kangxi himself is said to have made. They are carved with great skill, as if with divine inspiration. In the temple grounds is a tower over 10 *kil* high, with a round top, and a square base carved in the image of a lion.

Wanshou Temple was restored in Kangxi 55th year. In front of the Temple there is a portal with a hanging board that has the calligraphy, 'Long life into eternity'. The temple building is even more majestic and luxurious than Shengci Temple. The temple's yard is filled with pine trees, and there are memorial stones too. In the main hall hangs a signboard with Emperor Kanxi's calligraphy, 'The Merciful Cloud of Liaohai Sea'. There are so many treasures, too many to record, but including censers and precious braziers. There are ten or more lamas, all clad in golden yellow with gold-coloured felt hats. They are sturdy and all with fierce expressions.

Shisheng Temple had the signboard, 'The Lotus (Sutra) and Pure Land (Buddhism)'. The temple was built in Chongde 3rd year. The roof

was tiled with blue and yellow glazed tiles. It was the Emperor Taizong's memorial hall.



THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS

Zhubi shan Mountain is in the south-west of Liaoyang. In former times, it was called Shou shan Mountain. When Taizong of the Tang dynasty stayed there for several days during his expedition to Koguryō, he inscribed the words 'Zhubi shan Mountain' on a stone monument to commemorate a meritorious deed, and forthwith changed the name from Shou shan to Zhubi shan.

Kaiyun shan Mountain is in the north-west of Fengtian. It is ringed by numerous peaks and is the fountain-head of many rivers. Kaiyun shan Mountain is where Yongling Royal Tomb (of Taizong's ancestor) is located.

Tiebei shan Mountain is in the north-west of Fengtian. It is said that there are two Walls on the Mountain: Jie Wall and Fan Wall built by Emperor Taizong.

Tianzhu shan Mountain is in the east of Chengde Province. This is where Fuling, the Royal Tomb of Emperor Taizong of Qing dynasty, is located. This is the Dongmou shan Mountain that is referred to in *Jinshu* (History of the Jin dynasty).

Longye shan Mountain is in the north-west of Chengde Province. This is where Zhaoling Royal Tomb of Qing dynasty is located.

Shisan shan Mountain is in the east of Jinzhou Prefecture. There are thirteen peaks, on which Cai Gui (1115–1231) wrote the poem:

Beyond Lushan Mountain thirteen peaks rise
Every dwelling in the valley is a picture in itself.

Bohai Sea lies to the south of Fengtian. The *Shengjing tongzhi* (Comprehensive records of Shengjing) states that the land forming the northern part of the innermost gulf of the Bohai Sea is known as Bo. The Liaodong plain stretches 2000 *ri*, and the Bohai Sea is to the south.

The Liaobe River flows to the west of Chengde. The river is also called Gaoli he or Gaoliu he. But both in *Hanshu* (History of the Former Han Dynasty) and *Shuying* (Book of Rivers) it is recorded as the Daliao shui River. This river forms the boundary between Liaodong and Liaoxi. This

is the area where Emperor Taizong stabilized swamp land of over 200 *ri* and built a bridge across it so that he could attack Koguryō.

The Hunhe River flows to the south of Chengde Province, which is also called Xiaoliao shui, or Alijiang, or Xuanyu luoshui, among other names. The Hunhe flows from Changbai Mountain, then joins the Taizhe, and finally enters the ocean, together with the Liaoshui River. The Taizhe River flows to the north of Liaoyang. It runs from the outer edge of Yongji zhou Prefecture, and into the Prefecture itself. It then joins the Hunhe and Liaobe, and then becomes Sancha he.

Crown Prince Dan of the State of Yan is said to have escaped at the Taizi he River, but was recaptured and beheaded. His severed head was presented to the State of Qin. Later generations felt sorry for the prince and renamed the river Taizi he (Crown Prince) River.

The Xiaoshen shui River is to the south of Chengde Province. It flows from Guanying in Dongguan, into the Hunhe River. It is said that the land north of the river is called Yang, and the name Shenyang originates from this.

The mountains and rivers that I came across in my journey and which I have described here are mostly from the orally-transmitted words of local people, or the words I obtained from the people I met on the road. Some are the descriptions I got from Koreans who are frequent visitors to China. This means that the words and descriptions I have given are from my memory and are thus lacking in detail. For example, the Huabiao⁹⁶ is an historic remains in Liaodong. Some say it is inside the Wall, and others say it is 10 *ri* outside of the Wall. Judging from this kind of discrepancy, it is difficult to rely on other descriptions from such oral comments.

NOTES

- 1 The capital of Qing dynasty from 1636 to 1644, until the capital was relocated to Beijing after the fall of Ming. See also note 20 of Chapter 1.
- 2 This is an historic site of Qing Dynasty in Halin city. It is located in Mudanjiang prefecture, Heilongjiang Province, in north-east China. Halin city has a significant number of Manchu and ethnic Koreans.
- 3 Heilongjiang (Black Dragon River, Chinese name for Amur) is a province of China, located on the south bank of the river in the north-eastern part of the country. The Manchu name of the region is Sahaliyan ula (Black River). Heilongjiang borders Jilin in the south and Inner Mongolia to the west; it also borders Russia to the north.
- 4 Korean fermented rice liquor.

- 5 Time between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.
- 6 Strong liquor made by skimming boiled butter.
- 7 100 *kyōng* is just over 15 acres (6.07 hectares)
- 8 Wugeng (Kor. *gugyeong*) which means the fifth watch of the night, some time between three and five o'clock in the morning.
- 9 The Four Pillars for the year, month, day and hour of one's birth, which are supposed to have an influence on one's fortune.
- 10 Shenyang used to have two city walls. The inner city wall was built in 1625. Most of it was rebuilt on the old Ming Dynasty city wall, and the gates of the wall were increased from four to eight. The outer city wall was built during the eighteenth century to protect the urban area outside the inner city wall, which also had eight gates. It was also the headquarters of the Shenyang Military District.
- 11 The highest Taoist gods are San Qing (the Taoist Trinity). The three deities are worshipped as Qing (Jade Purity), Shang Qing (Lofty Purity), and Tai Qing (Absolute Purity).
- 12 The present Yeohŏn county in North Kyōngsan Province was called Chuohŏn County.
- 13 The betel nut or areca palm; a herbal medicine chewed to ward off or relieve indigestion.
- 14 Tian Chou was a literati of the Wei Kingdom (220–265) during the Three Kingdoms period (220–280).
- 15 It is used as an analogy to someone who is beautiful but lacks talent and virtue.
- 16 The calendar in China is a combination of two cycles, the Ten Celestial Stems (Shi Tiangan) and the Twelve Terrestrial Branches (Shier Dizhi). This system was already in use during the twelfth-century BC.
- 17 It denotes both the Dayoushan and Xiaoyoushan Mountains, underneath which is a cave where supposedly one thousand books are kept.
- 18 Chen Lin (? – 217), styled Kongzhang was a minister during the Three Kingdoms Period of China. Chen Lin became very well known as a result of the declaration (of more than ten pages) he wrote for Yuan Shao, demanding the execution of Cao Cao.
- 19 Lu You (pen. Fangweng, 1125–1210) was a renowned Chinese poet of the Southern Song dynasty with a collection of almost 10,000 poems, as well as numerous prose pieces.
- 20 The author is quoting from Major Odes (Daya) of the *Book of Odes* (*Shijing*).
- 21 Quanyi, Yuyi, Fangyi, Huangyi, Baiyi, Chiyi, Xuan yi, Fengyi and Yangyi.
- 22 Quotation from Discourses (*Lunyu*) of the *Annals of Confucius*, one of the Four Books.
- 23 There is a saying that in the states of Zhao and Yen were many resentful patriots, who sang sad songs. This is quoted from Tang dynasty master poet, Han Yu's (768–824) *Songdong Shuannuxu*.
- 24 The nobles, farmers, artisans and merchants.
- 25 This was said jokingly, as Mr Tian's given name Shi (*he*) means to be a government servant or to fill an office.
- 26 Yu Liang (289–340) was a Jin Dynasty (265–420) official and general.
- 27 Memorial sent to Emperor Ming (Crown Prince Shao) by Yu Liang, notifying his resignation from a government post (*zhongshujian*).
- 28 Wu Yingfang's (a Qing dynasty scholar) pen-name.

- 29 Primarily, *kuan* was an inscription in intaglio, engraved on the inside of a vessel, and *shi* was an inscription engraved in relief on the outside.
- 30 The reign title of Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) of the Ming dynasty.
- 31 Emperor Xuanzong's reign title.
- 32 The eighteenth-century imperial bronze catalogue *Xiqing gujian*, originally commissioned by the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–95). Liang Shizheng (1697–1763) was the chief editor.
- 33 Wang Fu's *Illustrated Record of Ancient Objects in the Xuanhe Palace*, published in 1119–1125. Details of physical appearance, measurement, inscriptional contents, and decorative designs were carefully recorded and classified.
- 34 Luning is one of seventy-four minor festival songs composed for a court group in Xiao Ya (Minor Odes of the Kingdom), from *Shijing* (the Book of Odes).
- 35 This is a song in the Minor Odes of the Kingdom, from *Shijing*.
- 36 He relates Pak Chiwon, as the foreign dignitary, to a white heron.
- 37 A lantern made of ram's horn, which was stewed and made into thin and transparent skin.
- 38 One of four texts of Confucianism that, when published together in 1190 by the Neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi, became the great Chinese classic known as *Sishu* (Four Books). Lunyu is considered by scholars to be the most reliable source of the doctrine of the ancient sage Confucius (551–479 BC).
- 39 The *Yi jing* (*The Book of Changes*) is one of the oldest of the Chinese classic texts. It is a symbol system used to identify order in chance events. The text describes an ancient system of cosmology and philosophy that is intrinsic to ancient Chinese cultural beliefs.
- 40 The name of a section of *The Book of Changes*, an explanation of the prognostics; an appendix or commentary.
- 41 'Do not be overbearing like Danshu' (son of Emperor Yao, 2255–2195 BC, succeeded by Yi).
- 42 Ngao could propel a boat on dry land!
- 43 Shun was a legendary leader of ancient China. He was also known as Yu Shun.
- 44 This is the 'Who's Who' of Manchurian and Chinese government officials.
- 45 Both Zhou and Zhou were government ministers of the Zhou dynasty, who later generations regarded as ideal government ministers.
- 46 Zhou Wen Wang (1131–1115 BC), the Zhou dynasty's founder, appointed Lushang as Prime Minister based on the divination of his dream.
- 47 A successful candidate in the imperial examinations at the provincial level during the Ming and Qing dynasties.
- 48 A poem of four lines each containing five or seven characters, with a strict tonal pattern, and rhyme scheme.
- 49 A courtesy name of Kim Chaehaeng, who visited Beijing in the 41st year of King Yōngjo's reign (r. 1725–1776).
- 50 The author is portraying a Chinese dragon, not the dragon of Western mythology. The Chinese dragon is depicted as a long, scaled, snake-like creature with five sets of claws. It has long been a potent symbol of auspicious power in Chinese folklore and art. It is traditionally associated with the weather as the bringer of rain and water in an agriculturally water-driven nation. Its female counterpart is Fenghuang.
- 51 An abbreviation of Sichuan province.

- 52 Or *yanzu* (wild goose). It refers to a letter which Su Wu, who was then a captive among the Xiongnu, sent from Tarryn by a wild goose to whose foot he had tied the message (second century BC).
- 53 Alta Fan Li. He was an adviser in the state of Yue in the Spring and Autumn Period. He became a successful businessman in his later years and was widely known as a wealthy person.
- 54 Li Si (280–208 BC) was the influential Prime Minister (or Chancellor) of the feudal state and later of the dynasty of Qin, between 246 and 208 BC. He was executed in 208 BC, and it is said that on his way to the execution, Li Si told his son, 'Even if I desperately want to take *huang quan* (yellow dog) for hunting, there is no way I could do it now, is there?'
- 55 Festive Forest (Kuaihuo Lin) in the Song Dynasty (960–1279).
- 56 Duanmu Ci (styled Zi-gong) was one of the seventy-two worthy Disciples of Confucius.
- 57 A successful candidate in the imperial examinations at the provincial level in the Ming and Qing dynasties.
- 58 A first degree graduate.
- 59 A senior licentiate.
- 60 A student of Imperial College, the highest educational body.
- 61 A salaried graduate of the first degree or *xincai* degree.
- 62 A first degree licentiate.
- 63 A game played during a drinking session.
- 64 Li Yu, styled Liweng (1610–1680), born in Rugao, was a Chinese playwright, novelist and publisher. He was also an actor, producer and director, who travelled with his own troupe.
- 65 A compiler second-class of the Hanlin Academy.
- 66 Hanlin Graduate House.
- 67 Zhou Wen Wang (1134–1115 BC), Xi Zhou Dynasty's (1134–256 BC) founder. He is also called Zhou Wu Wang.
- 68 A grain receptacle.
- 69 An ancient cooking tripod with hollow legs.
- 70 A wine vessel.
- 71 The Xi Qing Gujian, printed in the reign of the Qianlong emperor of the Qing dynasty (r. 1736–1795), includes the collection of antique bronzes belonging to the Qianlong Emperor.
- 72 Official imperial wares made at officially established kilns for the exclusive use of the imperial household. It is a type of celadon ware made during the Southern Song Dynasty. Usually the glaze is cracked and the colour tones range from grey or yellowish to bluish green.
- 73 Ge wares (Geyao) are similarly fired and made of a comparable dark body-paste to Guan wares, and they give off a similar dull sound when lightly struck.
- 74 The eyes, mouth and ears.
- 75 The heart, liver, spleen, lungs, kidneys.
- 76 Mi Fu (1051–1107), also known as Mi Fei was a Chinese painter, poet and calligrapher of the Song Dynasty.
- 77 Cai Jing (1047–1126) was the Imperial Tutor during the reign of Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty. Cai Jing held the post of Premier (or Prime Minister) to the Emperor.
- 78 Su Shi (pseudo. Dongpo, 1037–1101) was one of the major poets of the Song era.
- 79 Huang Tingjian (1043–1105) was a poet, painter and calligrapher, and regarded as the finest and most creative calligrapher of the Song Dynasty.
- 80 Dong Qichang, courtesy name Xuanzai, was a Chinese painter, scholar, calligrapher and art theoretician, one of the finest artists of late Ming.
- 81 In 1096, at the request of Emperor Kangxi (1654–1722), a set of forty-six woodblock prints known as the *Gengzhibu*, Illustrations of Ploughing and Weaving, was published.
- 82 Yang Shidao (cour. Jingyou) was a chancellor during the reign of Emperor Taizong of Tang.
- 83 Zhangsun Wuji (cour. Fujii) was a chancellor during the reign of his brother-in-law Emperor Taizong.
- 84 Hong Teyong (pen. Tanhön) was a *sihak* (Practical Learning) scholar of the late Chosön period. Hong is particularly well known for acting as a patron for Western science in areas such as mathematics, astronomy and even social systems that he had been introduced to during his trip to Beijing in 1766. Hong was a close friend of Pak Chiwön. His works include *Chubae siyong* (Mathematical texts) among several other treatises that present his ideological views, but he is best remembered for *Tanhönsö* (Collected Works of Tanhön). Hong's introduction and promotion of Western science had a profound impact on later generations of Korean *sihak* scholars.
- 85 The five degrees of mourning: twenty-seven months mourning for husbands and parents; twelve months for grandparents; nine months for brothers and sisters, etc.; five months for uncles and aunts; three months for distant relatives.
- 86 Yan'ai is a city in Shandong province. It is located on the southern coast of the Bohai Sea and the eastern coast of the Bohai Bay. Yan'ai borders the cities of Qingdao and Weihai to the south-west and east respectively. The largest fishing seaport in Shandong and a robust economic centre today, Yan'ai used to be known to the West as Chétoó.
- 87 Qi Jiguan (1528–1588) was a Chinese military general and national hero during the Ming Dynasty. He is best remembered for his courage and leadership in the fight against Japanese pirates along the east coast of China, and for his reinforcement work on the Great Wall.
- 88 A name for ancient eastern tribes, such as Korean, Japanese and Manchurian.
- 89 Shanxi is a province in the northern part of China. It was the location of the powerful State of Jin during the Spring and Autumn Period (722–403 BC).
- 90 Emperor Tazu (Guo Wei) of the Later Zhou Dynasty (904–954).
- 91 General prefect-king of Fenyang Guo Ziyi of the Tang dynasty. He was the eighth emperor Tang. Emperor Tang Daizong (726–779). During the An Lushan Rebellion, he acted as a field general, and successfully quelled the Anshi Rebellion.
- 92 Bolu is Huo Qubing's brother.
- 93 A military title during the Han dynasty. The author is referring to General Huo Qubing.
- 94 The second line of the couplet is from Su Shi's *Chibi fu* ('The Red Cliff').
- 95 A Buddhist monk in Tibet.
- 96 Ornamental pillars before a grave.

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In memory of my father
Professor Jaisou Choe,
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