

# The China Odyssey

A University of Michigan Expedition  
to China and Tibet  
1993

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During May of 1993, Anne and I had an opportunity to accompany a delegation of Michigan faculty and alumni on an extraordinary journey across modern China, including a visit to the autonomous region of Tibet. This trip was quite unlike anything we had experienced before. It combined high-level visits with government officials, interaction with the leaders of Chinese universities, and major alumni outreach activities with critical development efforts aimed at building endowment for the University's Center for Chinese Studies. In a sense, the trip represented a natural extension of the successful University Seminars series. A number of alumni who were significant supporters of the University were invited to participate in a trip, which had been carefully arranged by members of the Center for Chinese Studies, under the direction of Professor Ken Lieberthal. Included in the faculty group leading the trip were Leonard Woodcock, Adjunct Professor and former Ambassador to China, and Marshall Wu, Curator of Asian Art at the University's Museum of Art.

The intent was to provide these alumni with an in-depth exposure to China and exceptional access to China's leaders and educational and cultural institutions. Because of the unusual nature of the trip and the high level of anticipated interactions, it was felt important that the president should be a member of this delegation. This trip would represent the first time that the president of the University had visited China since President Shapiro's trip in 1981.

The arrangements associated with such an effort were complex, and planning for the trip started a year earlier. Although there were some last-minute changes in the composition of the delegation due to individual schedule changes, the final group included Bob and Gladys Nederlander, Marvin and Betty Borman, Sandy and



The Michigan Group

Jean Robertson, Richard and Susan Rogel, Ron and Eileen Weiser, Bob Lyons and Jan Tupper, Ken and Jane Lieberthal, Marshall and Judy Wu, Sharon and Leonard Woodcock, Joe Roberson, and Anne and me. Because there was last-minute capacity on

the trip, Anne and I also decided to provide our daughters, Susan and Kathy, with a belated graduation gift by inviting them on the trip as well. (As it turned out, Susan was the closest we had to a medical expert on the trip and was of considerable help during some of the more challenging parts of the journey.)

It was planned from the beginning that the trip should be self-funded, and all of the alumni involved were asked to pay not only their own travel expenses, but also the travel costs associated with the faculty leaders and development support. Anne and I used travel funds from the Office of the President, and, of course, we personally paid for the full cost of our daughters. Joe Roberson accompanied the group to provide both development and logistic support. Because of scheduling requirements and the physical demands of the trip, we had several last-minute cancellations, including Ira Harris, Tony Ridder, Will Caldwell, and Cal Grove. Such last-minute schedule changes are probably to be expected on any complex excursion; and, in planning future events, we should always make certain to have a back-up list (as we did in this case) so that a full complement can be achieved.

One final comment about objectives: Both Ken Lieberthal and Leonard Woodcock believed that it was important that this group appreciate the extraordinary pace of change in China. Unfortunately, in the aftermath, Tiananmen Square incident on June 4, 1989, most public leaders of our country had been cut off from China, although business leaders continued to expand their own involvement. This lack of understanding at the highest level between the United States and China is not only a matter of great concern throughout Asia, but it could seriously jeopardize the United States' ability to meet the challenges and grasp the opportunities associated with China's emergence as a modern economic power. Indeed, during the time we were in China, there was a study which placed the size of the Chinese economy as third in the world behind the United States and Japan. Hence, Ken Lieberthal and Leonard Woodcock tried to design a trip which would provide a comprehensive in-depth understanding of modern China. The itinerary of the group criss-crossed a good deal of the country including Beijing, Xi'an, Shanghai, Suzhou, Chengdu, Lhasa, Guilin, Guangzhou (Canton), and finally Hong Kong.

In addition to providing a better understanding of political and economic issues characterizing modern China, Marshall Wu had strong contacts with leading cultural institutions within China, including the Palace Museum of Beijing (the Forbidden City), the Shan'xi National Museum, and the museums in Xi'an, dealing with the tombs of the Qin Dynasty (including the terra cotta warrior excavations). Finally, through my own role as chair of the National Science Board, we were able to schedule meetings with leaders of China's science, technological, and educational communities.

## Departure

Since members of the group were coming from different parts of the country, we arranged to meet on May 11 in Tokyo (the Narita Airport) and fly together as a group to Beijing. Roughly one-half of the group left from Detroit on May 10, flying on one of Northwest's two daily non-stop 747-400s directly to Narita. This was a comfortable flight, if somewhat long—fourteen and one-half hours (or three movies and three meals, as an alternative way to measure the passage of time on transpacific flights).



Susan and Kathy on the Northwest flight to Tokyo

Because the flight arrived in late afternoon, Tokyo time, Northwest provided overnight accommodations at a hotel located about twenty minutes from Narita Airport. The arrival in Tokyo was a bit confusing because of the crowds and the language. We spotted Chuck Young, chancellor of UCLA, and his Vice President for Development at passport control on their way to do some fundraising in Tokyo.



Arriving at Narita Airport, Tokyo

Eventually our group found the way to transportation and to the overnight hotel. We were joined there by Sandy and Jean Robertson, who had spent the previous week in Japan on business; Bob and Gladys Nederlander, who had flown directly from New York; and Marv and Betty Borman, who had flown directly from Minneapolis. Ken Lieberthal and the Woodcocks had gone on several days earlier to Beijing and would be meeting the group there. The Narita Hotel was very modern, efficient, and rather bland in a Japanese business style. Apparently it was built as a joint venture by Northwest



Airlines to accommodate the high-volume of transpacific traffic making connections with other Northwest flights serving cities throughout Asia.

After a fourteen and one-half hour flight and an eleven time-zone change, it was rather difficult for most of the group to get any sleep. We left somewhat groggy early the next morning and were bused back to Narita Airport, escorted through unusually high security, and finally boarded a new JAL 747-400 for the flight on to Beijing. Incidentally, a direct route from Tokyo to Beijing would have required only about a two-hour flight. However, the routing took the plane from Tokyo to Shanghai and then due north to Beijing apparently to avoid flying over North Korean air space. After enduring the confusion and crowds of the Northwest part of Narita Airport, it was a relief to see the ultra-modern, high-tech JAL terminal, complete with massive video displays, luxurious waiting areas, and clean western toilet facilities.



Waiting in the JAL departure lounge for the flight to Beijing

The only complication was a rather steep airport tax that one had to pay just before entering passport control--\$20 per person. This airport tax was quite common in essentially all of the cities we visited throughout Asia and proved to be of particular difficulty when they accepted only the local currency for payment.

Just a few reactions to the brief overnight in Japan: While Japan seems clean and efficient, even compared to European standards, it is also the most expensive place on earth. Although we had an evening meal included as part of the Northwest Detroit to Beijing package, the price to a normal visitor for that simple meal would have been over \$100. Everywhere one turns, one sees ads for Louis Vuitton luggage, Rolex watches, and Mercedes cars (not Lexus). Looking at the landscape during the landing approach to Narita, one is struck not by the number of rice paddies, but rather by the number of golf courses, which are proliferating across the countryside. In many ways, Japan reminds us of recent visits to Germany in the sense that one has a population accustomed to a

rather simple living style that has now found itself extraordinarily wealthy and hence has developed an appetite for very expensive products.

## Beijing

After a smooth flight, complete with high-quality Japanese service, the Beijing airport was a bit of a shock. It was small, shabby, and rather dirty. The JAL 747-400 parked out on the tarmac, and passengers had to be bused into the terminal. (This was a common feature of Chinese airports. Although they are equipped with direct loading ramps, planes invariably have to park far away on the tarmac, and passengers are either bused or in some cases have to walk long distances to the terminal buildings. Although some suggested this was designed to better enable the Chinese to handle airport security, I suspect it was really because the loading ramps themselves are usually out of order and cannot accommodate the newer aircraft beginning to appear across China.)

As we walked through passport control and customs in the Beijing terminal, we were rapidly immersed in the incredible density of people that was to be one of the key characteristics of modern China. Everywhere one turned there were enormous crowds, rarely respecting any kind of line or order and in a constant turmoil, although with smiles on their faces. We finally managed to collect our luggage and emerged beyond customs only to find that the anticipated tour guides and buses were nowhere to be seen.

This is an appropriate spot for a detour on how trips in China work. In the past, access to China was tightly controlled, and all visitors had to utilize the official government Chinese International Travel Service (CITS). In the early 1990s several commercial travel services have emerged, but CITS continues to be the only travel organization with access to all of China, particularly to remote regions such as Tibet. In our case, we had negotiated in advance with CITS for all aspects of travel throughout China--hotels, bus, train, and plane transportation, tour guides, meals, etc. Although the national level of service provided by CITS is reasonable, the organization must depend upon local and quite independent offices in major cities across China. Hence, although we were accompanied throughout the trip by a senior national guide, in each particular city we were at the mercy of the local CITS organization. Hence, there was enormous variation in the quality of service--or the degree of rip-off--found in dealing with CITS.



Our CITS tour guide

After a twenty-minute wait, we finally spotted Sharon Woodcock and Ken Lieberthal waving at us through the crowd. They informed us that the CITS mini-vans and guides were indeed there but had been circling in front of the airport terminal trying to find a parking space. After a bit more confusion, we finally managed to transfer our luggage to them and boarded three mini-vans for the ride into Beijing.



The trip into Beijing

As with most Chinese cities, the airport was over one hour away from the city proper. This was particularly complicated in the case of Beijing because they were in the final stages of constructing a major super-highway toll road from the airport into the central city as part of their effort to attract the Olympic games in 2000. As a result, the available surface roads were highly congested with frequent construction delays. This was not too much of a problem going into the city, but it was to give us a rather considerable concern when we returned to the airport several days later to catch a flight on to Xi'an.

Generally, Beijing suffers from high temperatures, intense pollution, and frequent dust storms blowing in from the Gobi Desert during the spring. However, we had arrived just after a heavy downpour, and the air was reasonably clean and temperatures were moderate. Therefore, our ride into the city was comfortable.

All along the route were frequent billboards and posters proclaiming a "new, open China awaits Olympics 2000," part of the national effort to attract the Olympic games. Apparently an Olympic delegation had just visited Beijing and was traveling around the country to get a better sense of whether China really could mount the games. Although the Chinese leadership had made this a high national priority, it was a matter of some controversy because it would have to be funded by heavy taxes both on the population and on foreign business.

After a little over an hour, we arrived at our hotel, the Hotel Sara, a four-star hotel operated as a joint venture with Hong Kong interests.



The Sara Hotel, Beijing

The hotel itself deserves a separate story. During the previous week, Sharon Woodcock and Ken Lieberthal had been forced to change Beijing hotels three different times because of heavy construction adjacent to the planned hotels or because of booking difficulties. However, the Hotel Sara was an adequate hotel, conveniently located within walking distance of the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. Like most Chinese hotels, it contains certain characteristics which are rather strange to westerners: first, the power to all rooms can only be activated by inserting one's keys in a receptacle just inside the door. Since they allow one key to a room, this procedure means that even though the rooms may be air conditioned--a necessity in heavily polluted cities such as Beijing--each time one goes out, all of the power shuts down and the room heats up. (Although we quickly learned that it was easy to separate the key from the card which should be inserted in the room.) Second, there are no hotels in China where it is truly safe to drink the water. Bottled water is an absolute necessity. The better Chinese hotels always have both a hot thermos of boiled water for tea and a cold thermos of bottled water for drinking. Nevertheless, the first thing we generally found ourselves doing upon arrival in a city was going to a nearby vendor to purchase large supplies of bottled water.

Yet another curious feature of modern China is the currency system. For years the Chinese have had two separate currencies, the renminbi or simply RMB, as the general currency for the Chinese population, and the FEC, which was to be used by tourists. Indeed, tourists were required to exchange foreign currency into FECs. Only FEC could be reconverted back into foreign currency upon leaving the country. Further, most hotels, "friendship stores" (the government operated stores for foreigners), and most other tourist attractions will only accept FEC. Yet, although the FEC and RMB were supposed to be kept at parity--both denominated in the Yuan measure of currency--a black market had led to a rather significant discrepancy. While we were in China, the exchange rate for FECs was roughly 5.5 yuan to the dollar, while black market money changers could be found who would give up to nine to ten RMB per dollar, an exchange difference of almost 1.7. Although in years past, tourists have been at some risk in exchanging dollars on the street into RMB, it was clear that this was becoming increasingly the standard approach because of the significant difference in exchange rate. Members of our travel group began to utilize primarily RMB for currency and to take advantage of the many "entrepreneurial" money changers which surrounded western hotels in every Chinese city.

After we had had a chance to check into the hotel and rest for a few moments, we then reboarded our mini-vans for a trip to the U.S. Embassy and a reception hosted by the American Ambassador, Stapleton Roy. Roy had been Leonard Woodcock's senior assistant when he was Ambassador to China in the late 1970s. The U.S. Embassy itself was rather non-descript, similar to many other embassies in the diplomatic section of Beijing. At the reception we met a number of embassy staff who had received their education at the University of Michigan. It was clear that they had great respect and fondness for Ken Lieberthal, Mike Oxenberg, Alan Whiting, and the many other scholars who have been a part of the Center for Chinese Studies at Michigan.

After formalities, we received a thorough briefing by Ambassador Roy on China in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square. He indicated that the pace of change in China today was perhaps as great as any time in its history. Although the driving forces are economic, with the effort to move to a Chinese style of market-driven economy, these were causing inevitable stresses on the Chinese political system. In particular, Beijing was rapidly losing influence over the rest of China. Roy also was very candid in expressing his intense frustration that there seemed to be very little understanding within the United States government of either the challenges or opportunities characterizing modern China. He said that there had been very few high-level visits to China since 1989 and that this growing lack of understanding was not only putting the United States in an awkward political position relative to China and the rest of Asia, but that the United States was falling further and further behind other European nations in their efforts to build strong economic relationships with the exploding Chinese marketplace. He noted that the Chinese economy today is the fastest growing in Asia, most recently growing at a 14 percent per year clip, but with sustained growth projected over the next decade in



excess of 7 percent per year. Behind-the-scenes discussions with staff indicated both considerable disappointment and frustration with the new administration in Washington, both in their lack of expertise concerning Asia and their naivete in how to approach both political and economic issues. Roy impressed me as an old China hand, born in China, spending most of his life in Asia--clearly a career foreign service officer rather than a political appointee. But I also got the sense from him and others that try as they might, they have been unable to get people in Washington to listen to them and understand the extraordinary importance of the changes occurring in China and throughout Asia.

Following the reception and further discussion, we left for a brief dinner at a restaurant that we later learned was owned and operated by CITS itself. It was clearly an effort by the Chinese to provide a tamer, western-style Chinese dining experience. The food was of marginal quality and afterwards we gave specific instructions to the CITS guides that they were not to pull this stunt again. (Unfortunately, as later portions of this report will indicate, these admonitions frequently fell on deaf ears.)

Since jet lag continued to plague us for several nights, Anne and I got up early the next morning before dawn and walked over to the Forbidden City. It was fascinating to watch the Chinese morning activities as the various free markets formed, and the Chinese participated in their early morning exercise rituals--Ti Chi, ballroom dancing, sword play, and even aerobics to Chinese rock and roll music.



Our early morning walk in Beijing



How about a haircut?



The morning exercise



And the morning waltz



The vegetable market



An open air meat market

The markets themselves were fascinating, selling everything under the sun and complete with open-air barbers and dentists. Even at dawn the streets were populated with hundreds of thousands of people and crowded with bicycles. Interestingly enough, in over ninety minutes of walking through crowds around the center of Beijing, we saw no other westerners. One really feels totally immersed in a foreign culture in Beijing, at least at this time of the morning.





Marshall Wu leads the early morning walking tour of Beijing



Exploring with the Woodcocks



Now where did we leave our bikes?

Later in the morning most of the group went with the tour guides to visit the Temple of Heaven in the southern part of Beijing. However, Ken Lieberthal and I had worked with the U.S. Embassy to set up an appointment with the senior education minister in the Chinese government, Zhu Kaixuan, chairman of the State Education Commission. This was a formal meeting designed to complete the negotiations on scientific exchange between China and the United States in which the pivotal issue was the treatment of data associated with a joint research project between the University of Michigan and Beijing University. Prior to the Cultural Revolution, Michigan, with the support of the Luce Foundation, had developed an agreement with Beijing University in which the two universities would jointly collect social science survey data across China. We agreed to teach scholars at Beijing University how to analyze and process this data, in return for which the University of Michigan (and other U.S. scholars) would have access to the processed data. The difficulties arose in 1989 when the paranoia of the Chinese government in the wake of Tiananmen Square caused them to back away from the agreement fearing that there might be "state security secrets" contained in the survey data, e.g., strong resentment of peasant populations to the Beijing government, etc. For

the last several years the continued negotiation over restoring the original agreement has held up the resumption of broader scientific exchange between the United States and China. When we arrived in Beijing the day before we had learned from the Ambassador that within the last several days they had finally made progress and thought they had things back on track. However, they wanted me to meet with the Minister of Education to confirm that the Chinese were willing to return to the original agreement and to suggest once again, wearing my hat as chair of the National Science Board, how important this was to the broader scientific cooperation with the United States that China so desperately sought.

Ken and I had spent some time rehearsing this meeting, which we understood would be at a fairly high protocol level. As we expected, the meeting itself, held in the Ministry of Education, was of the normal "Chinese tea style" in which the Minister and I sit side-by-side with a tea table between us flanked on either side by our own interpreters (Ken Lieberthal serving as my interpreter) and then surrounded by additional staff. It was clear in the discussion that the Minister was well briefed on the issues and understood the importance of the Chinese providing U.S. scholars with access to the data collected in the joint project.

After we had confirmed, at least we hoped, that we were on the same wave length on this, we moved to other issues. He raised the question of whether there might be ways to encourage more Chinese students studying in the United States to return to China. At the present time, very few of them do. He, like several later Chinese officials, raised the possibility that universities in the United States would work with their Chinese counterparts to develop programs in business education, since they realize this is a critical need in the effort to modernize the Chinese economy. The meeting seemed to go well and after one hour or so, it was concluded.

While Ken and I were meeting with the Chinese education leaders, the rest of the group left for a tour of the Temple of Heaven.



The Temple of Heaven



Susan and Kathy at the Temple of Heaven



Scenes from the Temple of Heaven



After our meeting, Ken and I went to rejoin the original tour group at a foreign services club in the diplomatic sector. We learned there that the group had decided to bypass lunch and instead visit several parts of Beijing specializing in Chinese antiques before touring the Palace Museum and the Forbidden City in the afternoon. Ken and I had a brief lunch and then went to the Forbidden City to meet the group.



The Forbidden City



Entering the Forbidden City



Entering one of the temples in the Forbidden City



Kathy meets the dragon

The tour of the Forbidden City that afternoon was quite fascinating, primarily because the curator of the museum was both a personal friend and professional colleague of Marshall Wu. As a result, the group was allowed access into parts of the Forbidden City not normally seen by visitors. The curator brought out some of the most valuable Chinese scrolls to give us an opportunity to examine them.



Inspecting a scroll at the Forbidden City





The Michigan Group in the Forbidden City



The Duderstadt girls in the Forbidden City



Anne and Jim in the Forbidden City



Overlooking the Forbidden City

The Forbidden City itself is a huge complex with hundreds of temples, palaces, and buildings. Most of it is now open to the public-at-large, and there were tens of thousands of Chinese tourists jamming all of the places open to the public. After several hours, we concluded the tour and returned to our hotel to rest for the evening's activities.



One more photograph of the Forbidden City

That evening we attended a reception hosted by about fifty UM alumni from Beijing at a hotel on the other side of the city. All of these alumni had graduated prior to the Communist take-over in 1950, and even though most of them had suffered considerably during the Cultural Revolution, they had now risen to senior positions in the Chinese academic community. For example, my counterpart as head of the Chinese national science foundation was in attendance. Another alumnus was chair of the State Commission on Science and Technology. Many alumni had senior positions in Chinese universities and two of our former Barbour Scholars were presidents of women's



universities in China. It was a truly remarkable group, characterized by great distinction as well as by fondness for the University of Michigan. It was apparent that our visit meant a great deal to them, and after formalities, we spent a wonderful evening listening to them reminisce about their days at the University and bringing them up-to-date on the University today. Although the package of gifts that Joe Roberson had federal expressed from Ann Arbor to the hotel in Beijing had not arrived, I had the good fortune to bring along some back-up gifts in my own luggage and therefore was able to present the alumni with a pennant and several other items that would allow them to establish themselves as the Beijing Chapter of the University of Michigan Alumni Association.



The reception hosted by the Beijing UM Alumni Club



Michigan alums



and a Michigan student

Although most of us stayed until late in the evening with the alumni, a number of members of the group left early to attend a special performance of the Beijing Symphony in which a University of Michigan music student was to be the featured performer. This Chinese student had been sponsored by Susan and Richard Rogel and had arranged for them and other members of the group to attend the symphony. Although Anne and I were unable to accompany them because of the reception, we found out the next morning that it had been quite a remarkable experience. At the end of the performance,



the Beijing Symphony played the Victors to celebrate the visit of the Michigan delegation.

After another short evening (or exceptionally early morning due to jet lag), Ken Lieberthal and I once again left the main tour group and went to meet with the President of Beijing University while the tour group itself spent the morning at the Summer Palace of the Empress Dowager north of Beijing.

After a long cab ride, Ken and I arrived at Beijing University and were escorted to the administration building. Since Beijing University students were quite actively involved in the protests leading up to Tiananmen Square, the university has been surrounded by high walls and a Communist Party loyalist has been named president with the primary mission of keeping the students in place. We were scheduled to meet with the president once again to affirm our understanding that the University of Michigan/Beijing University research project was back on track. However, we were tipped off early that something was amiss when we were greeted by the provost of the University, Luo Haocai, and several staff of the foreign affairs office of the University.

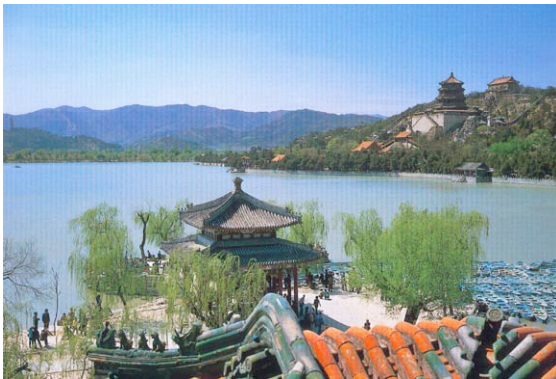
After the usual courtesies and formalities (service of tea, etc.), the provost announced that they understood that everything was in place to begin the joint research project once again, however, they felt they needed one slight change. They insisted that all data remain with the Chinese and that U.S. scholars would have access only to published results. Of course, this statement took us quite off guard since it was clearly an attempt to take things back to square one. For the next hour or so Ken and I engaged in a very difficult negotiation, flipping back and forth between English and Chinese, attempting to understand what was going on. In the end, we finally concluded that the leadership of Beijing University was trying to cover itself in the event that later state security would claim that they had been too lax in allowing sensitive information to be made available to the Americans.

After it was clear that the negotiations did not seem to be going anywhere, we indicated that we had other commitments that morning and rose to excuse ourselves. Ken asked to use the restroom and while Ken was out of the room, I pulled the provost off to the side and pointed out that in addition to being president of the University of Michigan, I was also chair of the National Science Board. I suggested that our inability to reach agreement on the Michigan/Beijing University project would have serious implications for the continuing dialogue and broader scientific cooperation between our countries. This really took him off balance since he apparently had not known that I had this broader role. After some discussion in Chinese when Ken had returned to the room, they asked if they could continue our discussions that evening. We explained that we had other commitments and since they did not seem willing to agree to the fundamental requirements in the agreement, such a meeting would serve no useful purpose. They quickly responded by saying that they felt that they might be able to put alternative

proposals on the table which would respond to our concern that evening and urged us to meet with them. We then agreed to do so.

Later that evening the group met once again with Ken and essentially agreed to everything we had been seeking. Apparently they had checked with higher level authorities during the day, decided they were in over their heads, and backed away from the effort to limit our access to the joint survey data. While Ken was more experienced in such Chinese-style of negotiations, even he was surprised by the rapid flip-flop in positions. In any event, at least for the moment, we seemed to have put the agreement back on track, thereby releasing the National Science Foundation to move ahead with a broader cooperative agreement between the United States and China.

After our meeting at Beijing University, we took a brief tour of the new Andrew Sackler Museum donated by the Sackler estate to Beijing to house some of their Chinese artifacts. We then took a cab over to rendezvous with the tour group at the Summer Palace of the Empress Dowager and then afterwards returned to lunch adjacent to Tiananmen Square in central Beijing.



The Summer Palace of the Empress Dowager



Kathy views a marble boat



Walking along the painted corridor at the Summer Palace



Back for lunch

After a short lunch, we wandered around Tiananmen Square a bit, swallowed up by gigantic crowds that tend to converge on the square for various occasions.



Tiananmen Square





The Michigan Group in Tiananmen Square

Unfortunately, the CITS buses left half of the group behind, and we ended up walking back from the Square to the hotel.



The Duderstadts at Tiananmen Square

Later that afternoon Leonard Woodcock had arranged a meeting with Li Lanning, Vice Premier of China. (The Premier, Li Peng, was in the hospital, so Vice Premier Li was the highest ranking official in the government--aside from Deng Xiaoping, of course.) The group met Vice Premier Li in the Great Hall of the People, adjacent to Tiananmen Square.



A visit to the Great Hall of the People

This was more of a meeting for show than substance, but the Chinese gave it the royal treatment. We were ushered into a large tapestry decorated room, posed for pictures with the Vice Premier and a number of his staff, and then sat in a large circle for the usual tea ceremony.



Meeting with the Vice Premier

In this particular case, Ambassador Woodcock served as the head of the delegation, and I sat next to him. There was extensive coverage of the meeting by both the press and by Chinese television. (We later learned that a three-minute clip of the meeting was shown throughout China on the evening news--quite a soundbite considering this was a 1.2 billion people audience.) The Vice Premier was cordial and pointed out the importance of joint ventures in helping China to modernize its economy. He did note that in 1980 General Motors had had an opportunity to participate in a major joint venture in China and simply did not respond adequately. As a result, the most popular foreign car in China today is the Volkswagen, made in plants near Shanghai. The Vice Premier echoed the comments of the Minister of Education in pointing out the need China had for advanced business education. He was quite pleased that a major university, the University of Michigan, played such an important role throughout China and lent his strong support for efforts to increase cooperation in education between our countries.

After the meeting with the Vice Premier, we were bused to a formal dinner with the former foreign minister of China, Wu Xueqian, a close friend and former colleague of



Leonard Woodcock. This dinner was held in the Diaoyutai state guest house complex, which is used for official events and foreign dignitaries. Even Leonard Woodcock was surprised that the Chinese had decided to host the banquet in our honor at the most traditional and prestigious of these guest houses, one that had been used to host similar dinners with Presidents Nixon and Reagan in years past. It really was quite an impressive experience. The dinner was staffed by a large number of beautiful young Chinese women, all dressed in color-coordinated silk dresses. The dinner itself was a twenty-course feast served on the imperial china. Anne and I sat with the Woodcocks at the head table surrounded by interpreters so that we could discuss issues with the foreign minister. Once again, Foreign Minister Wu took great interest in the University of Michigan and in American higher education more generally and was particularly interested to hear of the strength of our Center for Chinese Studies and the very large number of Chinese students who have attended our university. Although the dinner was quite formal in nature, it was nevertheless a thoroughly enjoyable experience, one of those events that one will remember for a lifetime.



Dinner at the Diaoyutai State Guest House

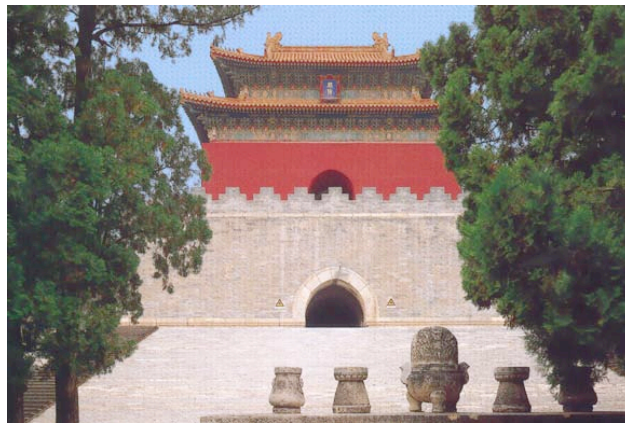


### Dinner at the Diaoyutai State Guest House

After another short night and a brief early morning walk over to Cole Hill, behind the Forbidden City, to watch the Chinese wake up in the morning, we boarded buses for a day-long visit first to the Ming Tombs and then the Great Wall, north of Beijing. We visited only the excavated Ming Tomb (the Ding Ling Tomb).



The entrance to the Ming Tombs



The Ming Tombs

There were enormous crowds--all Chinese--with hundreds of people hawking various items including food, drink, and souvenirs. It was quite an experience to be far underground in the tombs with thousands of Chinese tourists. We then went on to the Great Wall and found even larger crowds, this time interspersed with lots of foreigners (the first place we had seen them on the trip). The Great Wall too was crowded with many commercial activities, including a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet. The Great Wall itself was spectacular, although climbing up and down it took quite a bit of energy.

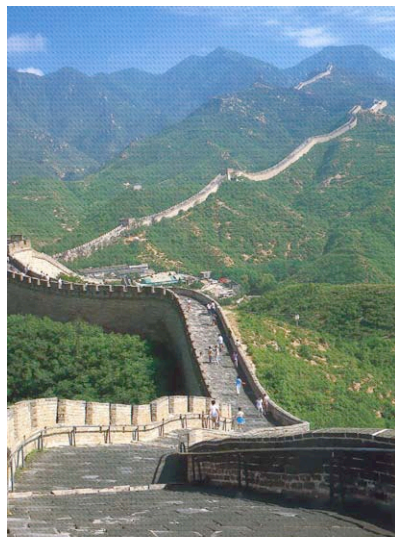




Kathy and Anne on the Great Wall



Climbing the Great Wall is hard work!



Jim has found a new jogging path ...





Kathy and Susan on the Great Wall



The Bormans and the Nederlanders



Jim, Joe, Susan and the Colonel at the Great Wall

That evening we went out to dinner at the Hotel Asia (a Korean joint venture) serving not particularly distinguished Cantonese food. However, the highlight of the evening was the Rogels and Weisers breaking out eight bottles of vintage Bordeaux and Burgundy wines they had brought along on the trip to celebrate Jean Robinson's 60th birthday.

Some general reactions to Beijing: Beijing itself is actually quite a lovely city with broad, tree-lined boulevards, fascinating people, and lots to see and do. It is also a city undergoing incredible change as the Chinese version of a free-market economy takes hold, joint ventures appear, and the city modernizes. Of course, it may soon be overtaken by apartment block structures that are mushrooming on the city outskirts. Also, a few months prior to our arrival they had unleashed over 10,000 taxi cabs on the streets and these were causing even denser crowding of the city streets, which are jammed with millions of bicycle riders at all times of the day. We were fortunate to arrive in Beijing following rain storms that had cleared away much of the pollution. However, as we prepared to leave, the heavy smoke and dust which characterizes the city in the spring and summer had begun to descend.

## Xi'an

Early in the morning we boarded the mini-vans for the trip to the Beijing airport to catch our flight on to Xi'an in central China. The trip out to the airport was a bit tense since we encountered gigantic traffic jams that threatened our departure. In China you are required to be present at least one hour before flight departure or someone else is given your place. Furthermore, one frequently has to pass through passport security checks before boarding Chinese airplanes.



Waiting for the flight to Xi'an

We were traveling on one of the new Chinese airlines that had spun off from the national airline, CAAC. In this case the carrier was China Northwest, and the equipment was a new European airbus. Although the Beijing airport itself was a madhouse, particularly for domestic flights, we were bused out and seated on a new



and comfortable airbus. The service was great--indeed, much better than the American branch of Northwest airlines.

The flight to Xi'an took roughly two hours, and we arrived at a new and almost empty airport. Once again, the airport was sited about fifty kilometers outside of the city of Xi'an, connected by a new tollway. We were met by our local guides and driven to the Golden Flower Hotel, a four-star property adjacent to the Xi'an market area.



Our hotel in Xi'an

After checking in, we were then bused to tour the new national history museum of the Sha'anxi province. The curator of the museum, Chen Quanfang, was not only a close friend of Marshall Wu, but had actually spent several weeks at the University of Michigan. He took great delight in showing us all aspects of the museum, which he portrayed as both the largest and the best equipped in Asia.



An official tour of the Sha'anxi Historical Museum





Touring the Xa'anxi Historical Museum



The Michigan group at the Xa'anxi Museum

During the personal tour, after a brief explanation and tea service for formalities, he then showed us a sophisticated computer-controlled archive of frescoes as well as extensive exhibits of objects from 7,000 B.C. through the Tang Dynasty. The museum was almost empty while we toured it, and we later learned that the admission price was 20 yuan, which is very expensive for local Chinese.

Although the city of Xi'an was very large--over seven million--it was quite a contrast to Beijing. The streets were crowded with pedestrians and bikes but very few cars and no cabs. All the surfaces were quite grimy from coal soot, and most features of the city looked shabby and a bit unkempt. It was noted that Xi'an was trying to use its museums and the fact that it was once the imperial city of China as a mechanism to attract tourists. Surrounding the city are hundreds of imperial tombs, few of which have been excavated. Furthermore, there is the famous terra-cotta warrior excavations which we were scheduled to tour the next day. The people density of the city was still overwhelming although the countryside, interestingly enough, was quite sparsely populated, with most people located in small villages or communes.

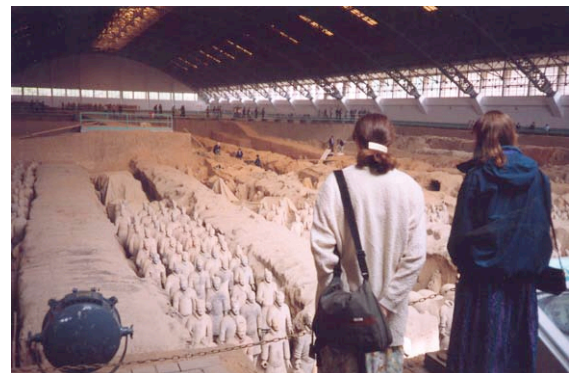
After a rather good dinner and another short evening of sleep, we boarded buses the next day and traveled roughly an hour north of Xi'an to visit the famous excavation of the terra-cotta warriors at the Qin Shi Huangdi Tomb. Once again, the curator of this new museum is a close friend of Marshall Wu and also had visited the University of Michigan. Indeed, he had been instrumental in working with Marshall to arrange the special exhibit of terra-cotta warriors at the University of Michigan the year before.



A visit to the Qin Shi Huangdi Tomb and the terracotta warriors



Excavating the terracotta warriors



Anne, Susan, and Kathy viewing the terracotta army





The Michigan group at the terracotta warrior excavation



The Michigan group at the Qin Shi Huangdi Tomb museum

He gave us an impressive VIP tour of this significant archaeological site, from about 210 BC of the Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi who was famous for first uniting China. We were escorted into the pit of the first excavation where there are over one thousand terra-cotta warriors lined up as they might have been in an original army. Not only were we escorted to a special viewing area at the edge of the pit and allowed to take photos (forbidden for most people), but we were actually invited to go down into the excavation to view both the recovery and the reassembly process. This was a real first--not even Reagan had been allowed to do this during his visit. Afterwards, the museum staff hosted us at a twelve-course luncheon adjacent to the museum. On the drive back to Xi'an, we stopped at a farmer's village to meet some of the rural Chinese, to visit the village, and to learn a little bit more about their own life and views of Chinese society. It was quite a contrast to city life.





Kathy encounters Chinese peasant life...and a peasant pig...

That evening we went to a dinner theatre to see a performance of "ancient Tang Dynasty dancing and music." However, this turned out to be a real tourist trap, rather hokey and expensive. Anne and I sat with the president of one of the Xi'an universities who said he typically had to host several visiting dignitaries at the performance every week. He really looked bored. Interestingly enough, this was the first real tourist event we had encountered in the visit to China. It was a bit disappointing, but not too surprising.



An evening of song and dance by the Tang Dynasty

The next morning we were bused back out to the Xi'an airport and boarded yet another China Northwest flight for the trip to Shanghai. Unfortunately, in this case the equipment was an aging, beat-up Russian Tupelov, which was very cramped, crowded, noisy, and dirty. (We understood a bit more why the Russians revolted.) By using mental concentration to detach ourselves from our environment, we managed to make it to Shanghai with only a couple of cases of air sickness.



Leaving Xi'an for Shanghai

## Shanghai



Arriving in Shanghai

Upon our arrival we were met by the tour guide and driven once again over an hour into downtown Shanghai to our hotel. This was the best hotel in China. A new forty-story Hilton--very western and very expensive. Since we had arrived late in the morning, we were driven over to the famous Jing Jang Hotel for a heavy lunch. This was the old hotel where Nixon and Reagan visited and where the Shanghai communiqué was signed.



The Shanghai Hilton

After returning to our hotel, we had an afternoon to relax. Early in the evening Ken Lieberthal gave the first of a series of lectures on the challenges faced by a rapidly changing China. He noted the great uncertainty surrounding the post-Deng



government. A number of members of the group then went for a brief shopping trip to the various "friendship stores" run for foreigners by the Chinese government. We converged for dinner at the Seagull restaurant on "the Bund," the riverside boulevard flanked by old European buildings from the days when Shanghai used to be a western outpost on the coast of China. The Bund looks quite similar to Michigan Avenue in Chicago, with the river running along side.



Our room at the Shanghai Hilton



A Chinese converter for Anne's hairdryer

Shanghai was chosen as the mid-way point in the trip for a couple of reasons. First, Shanghai is the most sophisticated city in China, with European quality hotels and western style amenities. It provided an opportunity for those members from the group intending to continue on to Tibet to prepare for the more strenuous part of the trip. Second, Shanghai would mark the point at which the Robertsons and the Bormans would leave the tour because of other commitments in the United States.

Shanghai is one of the largest cities in China with over twelve million people. Prior to the Communist take-over in 1949, Shanghai was the economic capitol of China, exceeding Hong Kong in its amount of international trade. However, during the cultural revolution it fell significantly behind Hong Kong and was further disadvantaged in the 1970s and 1980s because of its weak political representation in Beijing relative to other cities in China such as Guangzhou. However, today the Chinese government sees Shanghai once again as rising to a leading position in its economic activity. It has made major concessions to the city, both by reducing the share of its resources flowing to Beijing and by allowing it to set up a major new enterprise zone, the Pudong area, where a large number of massive joint ventures are underway. Shanghai was just finishing two weeks as host of the East Asian games and clearly demonstrated the sophistication necessary to become a great international city.

We began our stay in Shanghai with a relaxed morning and a late breakfast at the Hilton, more like a Sunday brunch, complete with a string quartet. Most of the group was interested in spending the morning shopping, and we tagged along. The downtown shopping areas of Shanghai are really incredible.



The Bund in Shanghai



A Shanghai street scene



Susan and Kathy shopping in Shanghai



Within the last year a series of massive department stores have appeared offering goods of western quality to the Chinese. Here I would note that sometimes it is difficult for tour groups in China to have full access to shopping areas since their CITS guides frequently get a 5 to 10 percent cut on all sales at selected stores. Hence, most groups get herded toward the large, state-owned "friendship stores," or shops that have a particular arrangement with CITS. Fortunately, our group frequently broke into smaller sub-groups heading off into different directions so this was not a problem.

In the afternoon we attended a reception hosted by UM alumni in Shanghai. In this case, the participants were twenty very elderly alumni who were absolutely thrilled to be able to meet people from the University of Michigan and reminisce about their days in Ann Arbor.



Jim speaking to the Shanghai UM Alumni Club



Hail to the Victors!

We learned that there were probably fifty to one hundred UM alumni in Shanghai, mostly graduates from the 1930s and 1940s in engineering and science. Many have had quite distinguished careers and suffered greatly during the cultural revolution. It was obvious, as in Beijing, that the University meant a great deal to them. Many also had children or grandchildren in the United States and were therefore able to keep up on happenings to some degree. The reception was held at what was at one time the YMCA in Shanghai and involved a number of others who had attended other American universities. It was clear from the discussion that Michigan and Harvard were the lead universities in terms of educating this particular generation of Chinese.

That evening we had a ghastly dinner (again a CITS arrangement at a local restaurant) followed by a performance by the Shanghai Acrobats. We had had the opportunity to see the acrobats during their visit to Ann Arbor a few years earlier, and it was clear that the performance arranged in Shanghai was primarily targeted to tourists and resembled more of a cheap circus with lots of animal tricks and second-rate performers.





The Shanghai Circus



More shopping

The next day the Robertsons and Bormans left the group, flying to Hong Kong and then back to the United States. The rest of the group would continue on to Chengdu, Lhasa, and Guilin before flying to Hong Kong. This would be the most difficult part of the trip.

Once again we broke into sub-groups, some visiting the Pudong economic enterprise zone, others a number of cultural sites such as Buddhist temples and museums, and yet another group that focused primarily on shopping. Wherever one travels in Shanghai, one is immersed in staggering crowds. Everywhere are signs of free enterprise, whether from street vendors, new shops, etc. Because professionals such as teachers, scholars, and doctors still receive salaries provided by the state, street vendors can make a living several times that of the professionals. This is causing both great disruption within Chinese society as well as leading to significant corruption. It is aggravated by the fact that most prices of common goods are comparable to or exceed the prices of similar goods in the United States so that many Chinese families have trouble making ends meet. The relatively low standard of living for professionals is also discouraging many young people from going on for further study at universities.

In the evening we were treated to yet another horrible meal--with almost the identical menu as our other four meals in Shanghai. We became convinced that the Shanghai branch of CITS was setting up the group. About the only interesting feature of the evening was a wild drinking party of thirty to forty Chinese men that created an enormous din in the restaurant. Several members of our group went over to join in to learn more about the Chinese. As the group was leaving later in the evening, we were surprised to see all of them picked up by a long line of police cars. Apparently the group consisted of a large number of Shanghai policemen celebrating an event of some kind.

## Suzhou

We had arranged a day-trip from Shanghai to Suzhou, sometimes known as the "Venice of the East" because of its network of canals. The day began on a sour note when we learned that CITS had booked us onto the sleeping car on a very old, dirty train.



A first class train ride to Suzhou



What is that hole?



Suzhou at last

Fortunately, the trip was only one hour, and we were met by a charming guide, an elderly English teacher, who took us on a fascinating tour throughout the day. We began by seeing a series of ancient gardens. We then went on to see a silk factory and finally the Suzhou Embroidery Research Institute, famous for its remarkable double-sided stitching, taking as much as five years per panel.



Suzhou, the Venice of the East



Anne trying to cross the street





The gardens of Suzhou



Touring the gardens



More green tea?



Susan and Kathy inspecting some Suzhou trinkets





Visiting a Suzhou silk factory



Bob Lyons and Ron Weiser money changing    Helping Rich Rogel carry his shopping

The gardens were remarkable, if a bit worn from the years (almost one thousand) and various traumas (the Japanese occupation, the Red Guards, etc.). Suzhou itself was a very crowded but sleepy city without the hustle of a Beijing or Shanghai. The return trip was on a "soft-seat car" on an express train although all of the railroad equipment looked pre-World War II.

In the evening we had finally broken away from our CITS guides and decided to dine on our own as a group at the penthouse Sichuan restaurant of the Hilton in order to move away from the blandness of Cantonese food. It was a marvelous meal, with rich spicy flavors, unlike anything any of us had experienced in the United States. As we were finishing our meal, we noticed that seated on the other side of the restaurant was none other than Ken Dvoskin (UM Professor of Asian Studies) along with two people from Guardian Industries. Apparently he was escorting them on a trip through China to learn more about the possibility of joint business ventures. It emphasized once again that the world is becoming very small, at least as far as the University of Michigan is concerned.



Finally, a great meal ... at the Szechwan Restaurant atop the Shanghai Hilton



Running into Ken DeWoskin atop the Shanghai Hilton

The next morning was spent at the hotel getting some rest before the long trip to Chengdu. While we were there, we did some comparison shopping and noticed that the prices of goods in the hotel shops were essentially equal to those in the downtown area. Yet the goods were also of significantly higher quality. The disadvantage of shopping in the hotels is that one could only use tourist money (FEC) and therefore goods were in effect about 1.7 times more expensive.



One last meal ... and one last temple in Shanghai



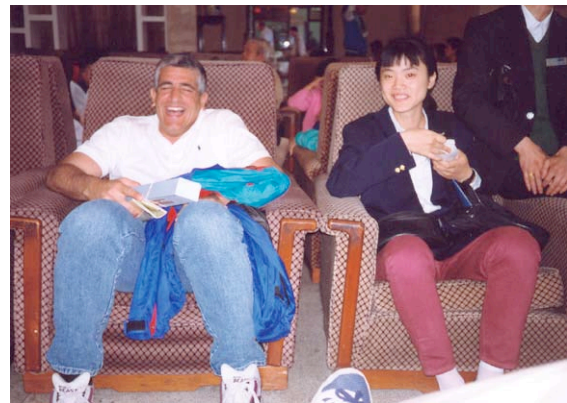
We left the hotel at noon, stopping for lunch at the Jade Pagoda, a Buddhist temple specializing in vegetarian food disguised to look like meat (fish, pork, duck, beef). Afterwards, we stopped by the state guest house compound near the airport where Mao and crew used to spend their time in palatial luxury and then on to the airport.



Ken arguing with the Little Buddha



Ken and the Big Joe



Waiting for the flight to Chengdu

## Chengdu

The airport was quite small for a city the size of Shanghai; and while it was not too crowded, our plane was packed, although we were the only westerners. Furthermore, our CITS Shanghai guides pulled one last trick on the group by assigning the members of the group to several seats that didn't exist on the plane creating a bit of confusion. (In effect, they wrote in several phony boarding passes, probably an example of graft through profiting by selling the real boarding passes to others.) The plane was a new Boeing 757, but it had a seating configuration that was typically Chinese--a bit cozy.



The flight to Chengdu was almost three hours. As we approached Chengdu we passed through a large bank of what we thought was fog. Later when we landed and took a whiff, we realized it was an intense cloud of smoke from burning the winter wheat off the fields surrounding the city. Chengdu was yet another mammoth Chinese city, over eight million in population, spread out across low-rise buildings and covered in a haze of smoke, like Beijing and Xi'an. There was a great deal of construction on the outskirts of the city, including an effort to build a super highway to the airport.



Chengdu

We arrived quite late in Chengdu and were bused to what we then learned was a two-star hotel (the Tibet Hotel) because of construction in the city's only western-style hotel. To make up for it they served us a "feast" meal, which was superb, although it was almost midnight by the time we finished.



Our plush quarters at the Tibet Hotel

After an evening in Chengdu, the Nederlanders the next morning indicated that a serious business emergency had arisen in New York and that Bob was persuaded by his brothers that he had to return to New York City. Hence, he and Gladys had to make arrangements to fly to Hong Kong the next day and then back to the U.S.

The group was also joined by one of Ken Lieberthal's students, Wu Jia, whose father was governor of Tibet during the early 1980s. Although Wu Jia was a member of the Yi ethnic majority, she was fluent in Tibetan and would accompany us on the Lhasa part of

the trip. It was interesting to note that her two sisters were also studying at the University of Michigan.

During the morning the group traveled to see a massive river project which supplied the entire Chengdu basin and most of Sichuan province with water, protecting it from floods. This project had been built almost two thousand years earlier.



A visit to the river project



A walk across the river



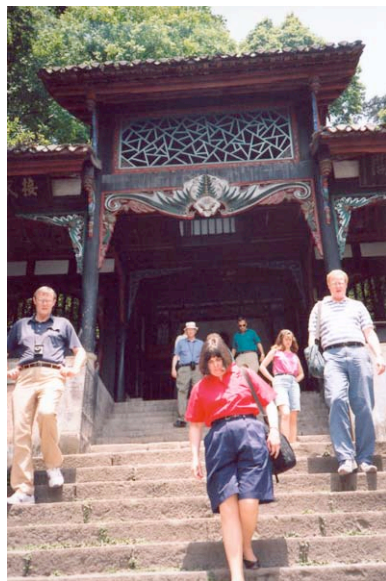
Kathy overlooking river project near Chengdu



We then toured a Daoist temple honoring the two engineers who designed and built the system. It was a long drive, but we got to see a good deal of the countryside including rice paddies, water buffalo, etc.

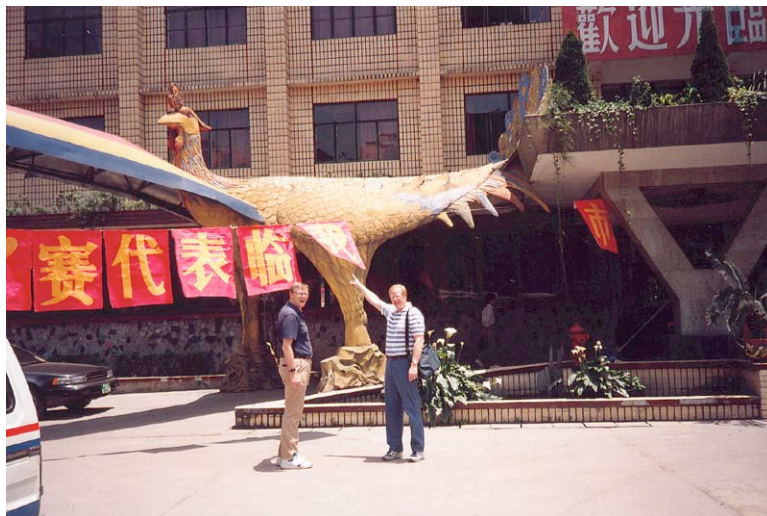


Bob Lyons trying his hand as a Chinese peasant



After another temple, even this menu looks good!





Is this the Chengdu version of Sichuan Fried Chicken?



Our last meal in China with the Nederlanders

In the evening we had a briefing on Tibet (and Sichuan) by the U.S. Consul General in Chengdu before going to yet another banquet. The Consul General alerted us that the day before a visiting European Economic Community delegation had caused a bit of havoc in Tibet by stirring up a major demonstration. He warned that the Chinese would be quite sensitive and that our group should take great care to remain neutral during our trip to Tibet.



A real Sichuan feast!



A toast to Michigan!

The next morning we had an experience that became known as "the giant panda odyssey". Sichuan province is the location of the giant panda. Chengdu has a large zoo, which has the world's largest collection of both giant pandas and lesser pandas. Hence, it was natural to try to arrange a trip there since the zoo was only twenty minutes from our hotel. Yet throughout our visit the CITS local guides gave us all kinds of excuses why we would not go there--the road was under construction, it would be two hours of heavy traffic, etc. They claimed that the only way to get there was to take petty-cabs (the bicycle version of the rickshaw). In the end we simply told them that we were the ones that would dictate where we would go and that we wanted a bus with a driver to take the group to the zoo. In order to do this we eventually had to bribe the bus driver with two packs of American cigarettes and then later a traffic cop \$5 to let us drive the wrong way on a one-way street. The trip, as we expected, took only twenty minutes out and twenty minutes back, and the pandas were great! What was really going on here was another example of the rake-offs CITS gets from the various spots where they take tourists. Apparently the zoo didn't pay a concession and therefore the guides did not want to take us there.



We finally saw a panda...





The lesser panda



The greater panda

After lunch we spent most of the afternoon at the hotel packing and resting up for Tibet. We had an early evening dinner at a Taiwanese restaurant and then got to bed early for a 4:00 a.m. wake-up call and a 5:00 a.m. departure for the Chengdu airport. Late that evening we were contacted once again by the U.S. Consul in Chengdu with a warning that Lhasa was under U.S. travel advisory because of ongoing Tibetan demonstrations. He did not discourage us from continuing but advised us to take great care.



One last shopping expedition



Even Chengdu knows OJ



Here we are, waiting again







Waiting for the plane to Lhasa



Poor Joe gets left behind ...

## Lhasa, Tibet

Flights to Tibet are extremely limited. There are typically one to two flights per day into Lhasa from Chengdu, two flights per week from Katmandu, and one flight per week from Beijing. Furthermore, the Chinese have significantly limited tourist access since 1989. The year before our trip, only 10,000 visitors had been allowed. The travel arrangements were complicated by the fact that the exceptionally high altitude of Lhasa--12,700 feet--creates some difficulty for aircraft. Almost all flights are in the early morning in order to take advantage of the higher air density before the sun rises. Hence, we had to have a very early morning departure to catch the plane. There was a bit of confusion at the airport--another example of Chinese graft--when our guides claimed that our airline baggage was overweight but then agreed to look the other way for roughly \$10 U.S. The flight itself, a new Boeing 757, was packed with all Chinese with the exception of our group which was seated in the last three rows. The view was incredible as we crossed massive snow-capped peaks surrounding the Tibetan plateau, although the ride was a bit bumpy because of the strong air currents over the Himalayas.



Flying over the Himalayas to Tibet

We landed in dazzling bright sunlight at the Lhasa airport, really just a landing strip and a few old buildings; and we were met by our women guides, one Chinese, one Tibetan.



Landing at the Lhasa airport



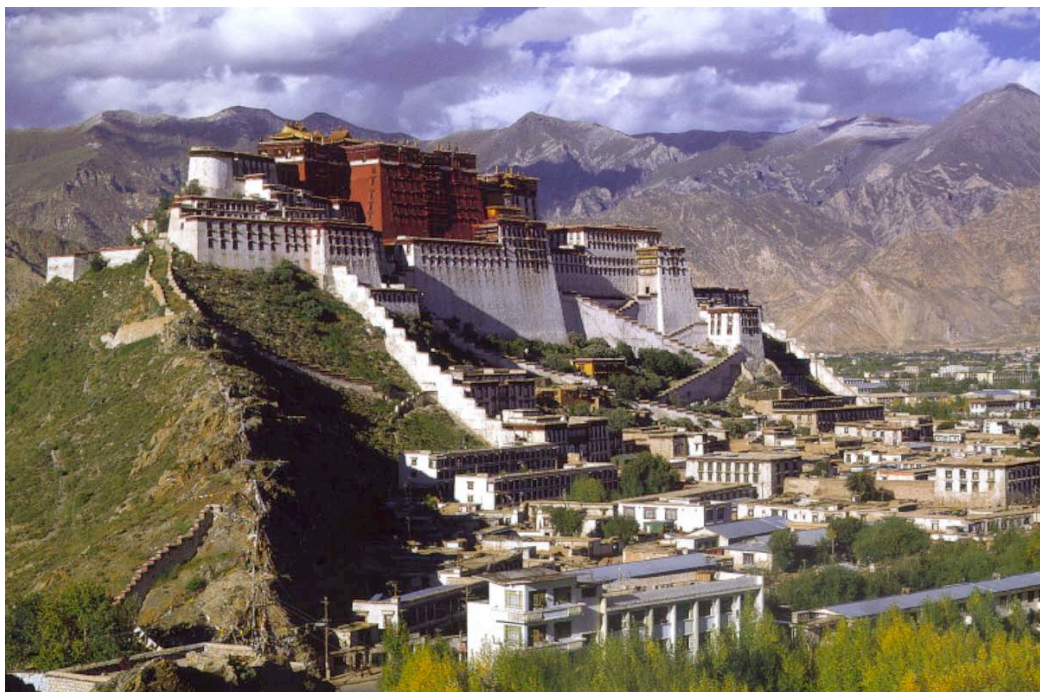
We then boarded a bus for a jolting two-hour ride to Lhasa.



The Tibetan countryside



Not quite like Texas ...



Lhasa, the city at the roof of the world...



Here I should note that there had been some trepidation about the trip to Lhasa because of the risk associated with very high altitudes. Since traveling to Tibet by air requires one to make an adjustment from sea level to almost 13,000 feet without time for acclimation, it is quite common for visitors to develop altitude sickness. Normal altitude sickness simply results in headaches, nausea, and dizziness, which will disappear after several days. However, it is also possible to get more serious altitude sickness that can result in death if one is not brought down to lower altitudes immediately. This particular malady is not correlated with either age or physical conditioning and is totally unpredictable. Nevertheless, it is not infrequent, and many groups have to send members back to Chengdu on the next available plane. Because of these health concerns, Joe Roberson arranged to stay in Chengdu during the five days we would be in Tibet to serve as a back-up in case we had to send anyone out. We had had a good deal of medical information on precautions to take, and many of us had started on a special medication, Diamox, forty-eight hours before traveling to Lhasa in order to readjust our metabolism to more efficiently handle the low oxygen environment. We had also been advised to take great care in handling other stresses in the Tibetan environment such as the harsh sunlight and the exceptionally dry air, which can lead to very rapid dehydration. For that reason we were strongly urged to drink eight to ten litres of water every day and to cover every exposed part of our body with sunblock.

As it turned out, the only people in our group who had significant difficulties with the altitude were Marshall and Judy Wu and the student, Wu Jia--interestingly enough all Asian. Others had mild headaches, temporary nausea or dizziness, but the symptoms rapidly disappeared. We later learned that the Tibetans find that Americans and Europeans adapt well to the higher altitude, but Asians--particularly Japanese--more frequently run into serious bouts of altitude sickness. They believe that the meat-rich diet of westerners gives them more capacity to handle a low-oxygen environment.

A bit of a background on the ethnic tension in Tibet and the way that tourists are handled. Although the autonomous province of Tibet is huge--almost 25 percent of the land mass area of China--it is harsh terrain. Most of the Tibetan plateau is over 12,000 feet in altitude, and mountainous surroundings have led to very low population densities. At present roughly 1.8 million Tibetans occupy the region, with roughly 150,000 in the city of Lhasa. Yet, Tibet itself has been ruled by China since the 1950s, and all of the senior officials are Han Chinese. During the Communist take-over of China in the 1950s and 1960s, and particularly during the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese made an effort to destroy both the culture and the religion of the Tibetans. Most of the monasteries were destroyed, and religion was banned for a period of time. Tibetans themselves were treated as a primitive, relatively worthless people. However, since the late 1970s and early 1980s the Chinese have come under great international pressure to respect the unusual nature of the Tibetan culture and to allow the reestablishment of Tibetan religion and the rebuilding of major monasteries.

Key in this relationship has been the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, who is regarded as a living Buddha. He was forced to flee the region in 1959 and has lived since in exile in India. The Tibetans still revere the Dalai Lama and await his return. The Chinese, however, express great concern that upon returning to Tibet, the Dalai Lama might be the nucleus of a major movement toward Tibetan independence. As a result, there is an ongoing tension between the Chinese and the Tibetans, and frequent demonstrations occur. During the days we were in Tibet there were a number of demonstrations aimed at economic issues such as taxation, rising prices, and fear that the growing population of Han Chinese was pushing the Tibetans out of Lhasa. But underneath all of this was a strong movement on the part of many Tibetans for independence.

One can see these ethnic tensions when driving through the city of Lhasa, which really is two cities, one very Chinese in style, which houses both the Han Chinese who essentially rule Tibet along with families of the large number of Chinese military, and the Tibetan part of the city, a totally different kind of architecture, primarily populated by native Tibetans.



A Yak statue ... arranged by the Chinese, of course



The real Tibetan Lhasa



Already polluted by the Chinese



Because of the fascinating culture of the Tibetan people and the extraordinary beauty of the Tibetan region, the Chinese began to allow significant tourist traffic in the 1980s. Several western-style hotels were built, including a major 500-room hotel that was later taken over and managed by Holiday Inn.



The Holiday Inn Lhasa

However, after 1989 the Chinese dramatically reduced the flow of tourists to Tibet due to fear of western agitation of the Tibetan demonstrations for independence as well as western pressure concerning human rights issue surrounding the Chinese treatment of these people. As a result, when we arrived in Lhasa, we found only one western hotel open--the Holiday Inn--and fewer than 20 percent of its 500 rooms were occupied. There were only a few organized tourist groups in the hotel: a couple of American groups, a Dutch group, a German group, and a Japanese group. All of these groups were tightly controlled by the Chinese. We found ourselves in Lhasa at a time of particular tension because of continuing demonstrations occurring around the market area--the Barkor area--which was the pilgrimage path around the Jokhang Temple, the center of Tibetan religious life. As a result, the Chinese government had declared this part of Lhasa off-limits to western tourists and forbid any tourist groups from going into the central city. Indeed, we had some concern that the Chinese might even restrict westerners to the hotel area itself or fly them out of Tibet. As it happened, we later found that the demonstrations themselves had subsided and the Chinese had relaxed a bit. While it was certainly not encouraged, the Chinese would turn their back and allow individuals to take pedi-cabs into the market area. Nevertheless, there was great sensitivity.

Because of the religious significance of the exiled Dalai Lama, the Tibetan people greatly appreciated any relics such as pictures of the Dalai Lama. As a result, many western tourists bring such pictures to Tibet and quietly distribute them among the Tibetan people. Yet, the Chinese were clearly quite sensitive to this, since they feared that it would trigger demonstrations. An American group had been caught distributing such pictures in the Barkor area several days earlier and had been confined for the remainder of their stay to the hotel area. For that reason, we made every effort to discourage members of our group from distributing these pictures, albeit without much success.

After a two-hour drive into the city, we arrived at the Lhasa Holiday Inn, which, aside from its location on "the roof of the world", looked like many other Holiday Inns, although surrounded by tight security. We had been taking Diamox for a couple of days and drinking liter after liter of bottled water. This posed a bit of a dilemma since Diamox is a very strong diuretic, so during this acclimation period one could not stray too far from restrooms. Although we had arrived quite early in the morning, the rest of the day had been set aside as a rest day in order to limit any exertion in the acclimation process. Although a number of members of the group complained of shortness of breath, headaches, and tingling hands and feet, nothing serious had happened. We found a fax waiting for us at the Holiday Inn from the Consul General in Chengdu providing us with more information about the demonstrations and once again urging us to take caution.



Arriving in Lhasa



Time for some oxygen

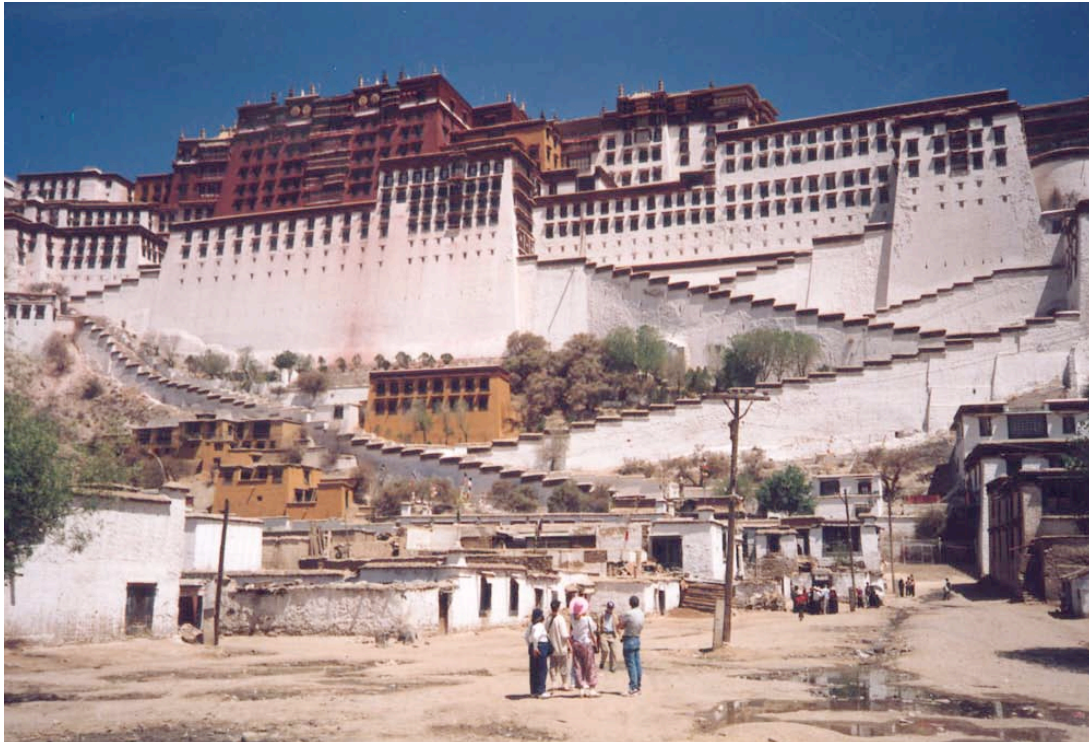
The next morning we began the visit to Tibet with one of the real highlights of the trip, the Potala Palace, the 1,000 room palace of the Dalai Lamas that looms over Lhasa.



The Potala



This massive structure not only served as the living quarters of the Dalai Lama but also contains the tombs and relics of previous Dalai Lamas as well as a massive fortress and prison that supported the government functions of the ancient Tibetan feudal society. Since the palace is on a large hill overlooking the city, it requires a great deal of climbing in order to see it. Hence it is usually scheduled later in the visit for most tour groups to give them adequate time to adapt to the altitude. However, because of the ongoing demonstrations, our guides decided to schedule the tour of the Potala as the first component of our trip in case further travel in Tibet was later restricted.



Our group arrives at the Potala

One enters the Potala by climbing a large number of steps, entering at the top, and then descending through its various levels.



Climbing up toward the top



Kathy pauses by some prayer flags



We made it to the top!

We began by touring the Red Palace of the Dalai Lamas, viewing the tombs of previous Dalai Lamas encased in tons of solid gold and jewels, and the living quarters of the exiled Dalai Lama. We then continued further into the White Palace, containing spaces for government functions. The views from the Potala were extraordinary with the gold roofs gleaming in the bright sunshine against a dark blue sky and the mountains in the background.





The rooftop temples of the Potala



Kathy, on the top of the Potala

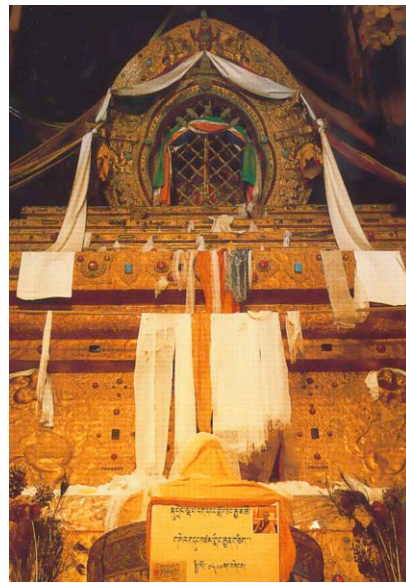
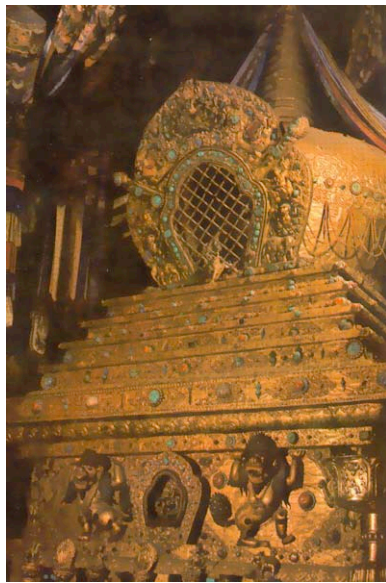


Jim, Ken, and Jane Lieberthal ... and a bunch of junior monks



Tibetan peasants tamping down rocks on the roof of the Potala (with Ken and Bob)

The rooms were lit by yak butter lamps, and there was the mixture of the pungent smell of the yak butter with the smell of jasmine incense. Throughout the palace as well as throughout the monasteries there were large numbers of monks engaged in various religious activities.



The tombs of earlier Dalai Lamas



Kathy looking for the W.C.



Jim found it! The Potala potty!

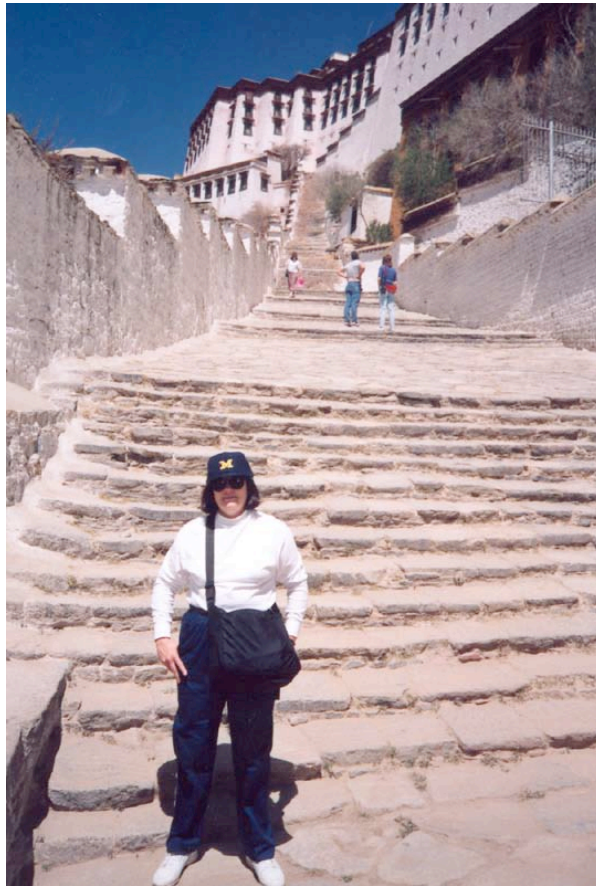




Kathy, Susan, and Anne emerging from the White Palace



The Duderstadts at the Potala



Anne, descending back down from the Potala



Jim coming down

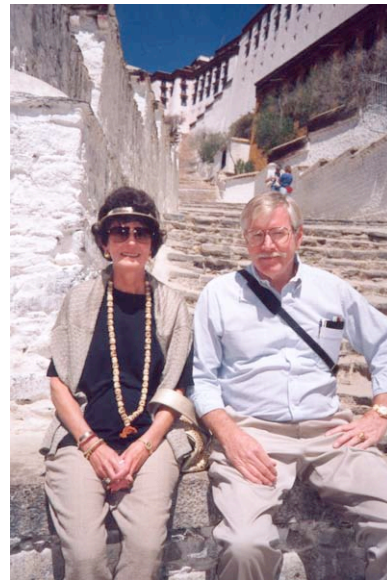
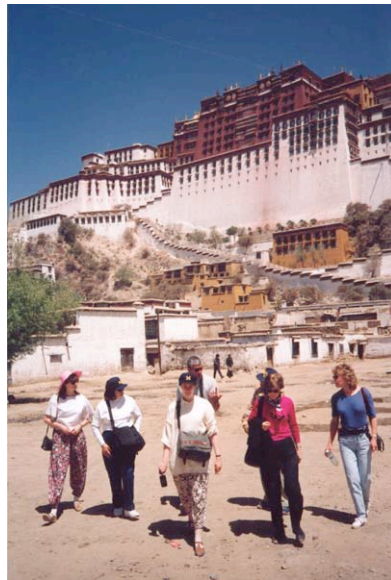


Kathy headed back up

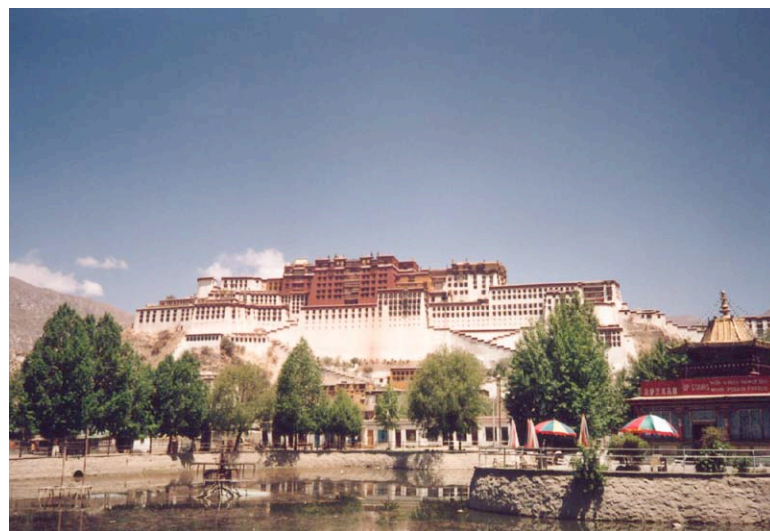




The Potala staircase



Leaving the Potala ... except for Bob and Jan (who wanted to stay)



A view of the Potala from across the river





The Michigan expedition to Lhasa



Rich Rogel photographing the "howmuch" ladies



The rear of the Potala





One last view of the Potala

In the afternoon we visited the Sera Monastery, one of the largest active monasteries in Tibet with over 500 monks. We toured much of the monastery, walking with pilgrims and even getting a chance to see the novice monks engaged in their daily "debates" where they test each other's knowledge of Buddhist philosophy.



Young monks debating Buddhist philosophy at the Sera Monastery





Dogs, dogs, everywhere (perhaps somebody's ancestors)



Pilgrims (note the pilgrim on the road)



Prayer flags in Lhasa



While the Tibetan knowledge of English is very limited, they do ask for pictures of the Dalai Lama whenever they run into westerners so one can understand the temptation. We finished the day watching pilgrims walk their clockwise circles around the old city--some of them prostrating themselves all of the way including across traffic laden streets. That evening we rebelled against the pre-arranged meal at the Tibet Hotel--really bad news. We walked back to the Holiday Inn and ate in its "Hard Yak Cafe", ordering yak burgers and fries. Since the yak is really just a cow with lots of hair, yak burgers are almost like a Big Mac...



The Hard Yak Cafe



Kathy eating a yak burger (a Big Yak)



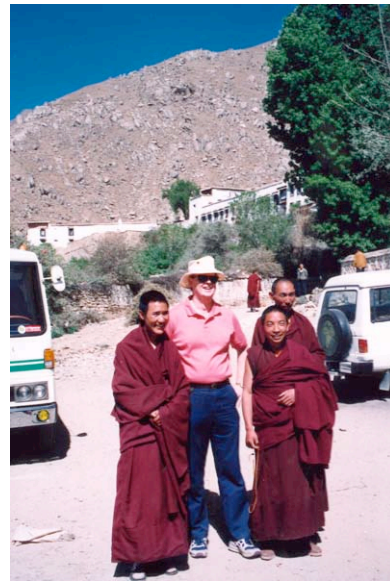
A toast at the Hard Yak Cafe

The next morning we traveled into the hills overlooking Lhasa to visit the Drepung Monastery, which at 14,000 feet was a climbing challenge. This had once been a

monastery with over 10,000 monks, but it was almost totally destroyed by the Red Guard. It has since been rebuilt and is now back to about 500 monks.

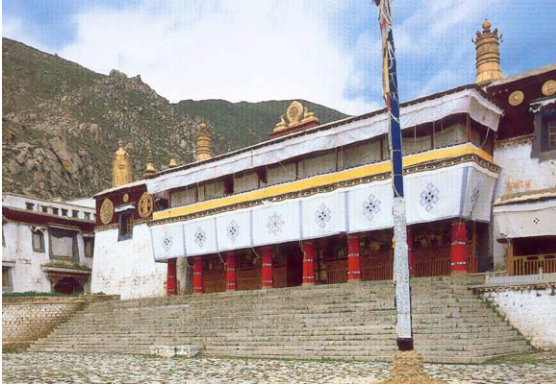


The Drepung Monastery



Kathy, Jim, and several monks at Drepung





Surrounded again by “how-much” ladies at Drepung

It was a fascinating place to roam around. Afterwards we visited a Tibetan village and had yak butter tea with a Tibetan family. Their living quarters, while primitive by American standards, were far better than those of the Chinese complete with a small room for religious activities. As for the yak butter tea . . . yuck!



Visiting a Tibetan village near Lhasa



Being served yak butter tea





Ken found the "facilities"



But look what Susan and Kathy found!



Bob Lyons in his element...yak dung!

In the afternoon we toured the summer palace of the Dalai Lamas and spent most of the time touring the present Dalai Lama's compound built in 1954. It was interesting to see what "modern" Tibetan standards were. He did have western-style plumbing in both his own quarters and guest quarters. The palace was filled with pilgrims praying and prostrating themselves before pictures of the Dalai Lama.



Visiting the Summer Palace of the Dalai Lama





The current Dalai Lama's Summer Palace

That evening we were invited to dinner by the highest ranking official in Tibet, Ten Zin, Deputy Secretary of the Committee of the Tibetan Autonomous Region.



The Michigan delegation, ready for dinner with the governor

The dinner was hosted in a rather decrepit looking restaurant--probably the best in town--and we appeared to be the only guests. I am certain that they went to great effort and expense to provide us with a true Chinese banquet--twenty or more courses--with lots of toasts using the infamous Maotai--160 proof barley whiskey. Although one learns never to ask what one is eating, we later learned that the meal contained many

delicacies, such as snake; duck entrails; sea cucumbers; cuttle fish; a turtle that was carved on the table in front of us (Susan got the head); and a special treat, pigeon soup made from wild pigeons they had shot that morning above the monasteries and flavored with worms for prolonging health.



Ken and Jim greeting the governor



Ah, pigeon and worm soup ...



Jim, Ken, and the governor (note the wool wallpaper ...)



As we struggled our way through this gourmet event, we had an opportunity to talk at some length with the Deputy Secretary--we were all surrounded with both Chinese and Tibetan translators. Although he took the party line on almost all questions, insisting that the Chinese and Tibetans loved one another and that there were very few Chinese in Tibet, we did read a good deal between the lines which helped us better understand Lhasa.

The next day started off with a bit of a misfire. We were supposed to visit the Tibetan medical school and meet with its president, who is one of the most distinguished figures in Tibet. The guide instead took us to the Tibetan Medicine Hospital.



A visit to a Tibetan hospital

We were part way through a gruesome tour, seeing how Tibetans treat patients, before we realized the mistake. At that point no one had any more interest in medicine, and we shifted our tour to a nunnery in the central Tibetan part of Lhasa. This was interesting since women generally suffer great discrimination in Asia.



Kathy visits a Tibetan nunnery

The nuns had shaved heads just like the monks. We attended one of their prayer services. Finally, we visited a tent-making factory where they made colorful Tibetan tents. Hence, we had a complete but somewhat unsatisfying morning. No telling what kinds of diseases we picked up in the hospital!

We spent most of the afternoon around the hotel packing and resting up for the next day's trip. Just as on our arrival, we would be getting up well before dawn in order to travel to the airport to catch the early morning return flight. A number of members of the group took petty cabs down to the Barkor-Jokhang area--illegally, of course, but we felt it best to avoid possible trouble.



The Barkor and the Jokhang Temple, the most sacred site in Tibet



A view of the Potala from the roof of the Jokhang Temple

We later learned that there had been extensive coverage of demonstrations in Lhasa across the United States, although it was primarily based on hype and speculation since reporters were not admitted into Tibet during this period. Apparently a number of folks in Ann Arbor knew we were in Lhasa at the time, and these news reports raised some concerns. Late in the afternoon it actually began to rain in Lhasa--a very early start to the monsoon season--and the surrounding mountains rapidly covered with snow.





When it rains in Lhasa in June, it snows in the foothills



A visit to a Tibetan weaving factory



The Weisers buy a Tibetan tent



Back to the Holiday Inn ... where Ken gets a spicy surprise!

Some general comments on Tibet are appropriate here: As I noted, while we were in Lhasa there were demonstrations against the Chinese government concerning both economic issues (prices and taxes) and calling for a reduction in the number of Han Chinese allowed into Tibet. The Chinese handled these demonstrations firmly but with minimal violence (tear gas), in contrast to the past where they simply have shot the protestors. The demonstrations continued, involving both monks and students. Clearly the real issue was agitation for the return of the Dalai Lama and for Tibetan independence. Yet, in reality, there seems little likelihood of independence since Tibet is viewed by both the Chinese as well as much of the rest of the world as part of modern China. The Tibetan culture until Chinese rule entered was a primitive feudal society in which most Tibetans led an extremely harsh life. The Chinese, while being rather heavy handed, at least have improved the quality of Tibetan life. Now the great challenge is how to preserve the Tibetan culture and prevent the country from being overrun by the Han Chinese who see substantial business opportunities in this remote region of the world.



The people of Tibet





The people of Tibet

Our departure from Lhasa to fly to Guilin began positively enough. We left the Lhasa hotel at 6:00 a.m. and drove through a dawn exposing beautiful snow-covered mountains from the evening's rain. After a two-hour trip to the airport, we went through the usual ordeal of waiting in decrepit rooms with crowds of Chinese and finally were bused directly out onto the tarmac at the Lhasa airport to wait for thirty minutes while our plane was prepared. The flight left on time. Interestingly enough, I timed the take-off and in contrast to the 25 seconds required for lift-off at sea level, it took over 40 seconds for the 757 to lift-off in Lhasa, reaching just enough altitude to clear the mountains surrounding the runway



Waiting at the Lhasa airport for our plane to Chengdu



Boarding our flight out of Tibet

## Guangzhou

The flight to Chengdu was uneventful. However, when we arrived at Chengdu, we were greeted by Joe Roberson with news that our flight to Guilin had been switched that morning to a 6:00 a.m. departure and had left without us (apparently having been commandeered by a group of Chinese VIPs.)



Ken Lieberthal argues with “the Panderman” about our missing plane

The only other flight out of Chengdu that day was to Guangzhou (formerly Canton), although there was the possibility of a late afternoon flight to Guilin the next day. We had planned only one full day in Guilin to do the famous river trip.



Well, Joe, what have you been up to for the last several days?



Hence there was really no point in us flying in for an evening and then flying out the next day to Hong Kong so that we could catch our flights on to the U.S. Instead, we overruled the local guides and contacted the CITS national operation in Beijing and arranged to fly that afternoon to Guangzhou. It was our intent to spend the night there and then take the first available transportation ninety miles down river to Hong Kong the next morning. Since we didn't trust the CITS local staff in Chengdu, we wanted to get out as soon as possible.

After a good deal of phone calling and arguing, we managed to make the arrangements. Joe Roberson had been staying for the past five days at the only western hotel in Chengdu, the Jing Jiang. Since our flight would not depart until 5:00 in the afternoon, we instructed the guides to take us there for a comfortable lunch and some relaxation before we returned to catch the flight.



Different styles of waiting for our plane in Chengdu.

Although the flight was on a Russian TU145--ugh--the trip to Guangzhou was bearable; and we had managed to arrange overnight lodging in a five-star hotel, the White Swan, which enabled us to shower off the Tibetan dust.



Oh, no, not another Russian Tupelov...



Arriving at the White Swan in Guangzhou ... and then leaving again



Saying goodbye to our CITS guide

Early the next morning we boarded buses for an hour ride through Guangzhou to the hydrofoil ferry landing. (Once again, CITS pulled a fast one because they didn't mention that there was another hydrofoil landing right beside our hotel and instead drove us across the river and south of Guangzhou to an alternative landing.) The trip through Guangzhou was interesting, however, and once again the extraordinary density of people was overwhelming.



Not many folks leave China on a hydrofoil...



The hydrofoil was a very comfortable high-tech ride. It was only about 20 percent full which gave us a good deal of room to spread out. The trip down the Pearl River was not very scenic, both because of seasalt encrusting the windows and because the river itself at that point is very industrial.

We arrived in Hong Kong at 1:00 p.m., obtained our luggage, cleared customs, and then found ourselves waiting in a taxi madhouse--Hong Kong has been overrun by cars--with no sign of the transportation arranged from the Peninsula Hotel.



Arriving in Hong Kong ... but where is the Rolls Royce?

Eventually we got through to the hotel, and a fleet of Rolls Royces showed up to pick us up--the first signs of real civilization. Since the hotel was only a few blocks from the ferry landing on the Kowloon Peninsula, the trip to the hotel took only a few minutes.



Back to civilization in Hong Kong

We found the Peninsula Hotel to be one of the top hotels in the world with the advertised 4.5 staff per room working very hard to make guests comfortable.



The Penninsula Hotel

Although the hotel is somewhat older, and its famous view of the harbor is now blocked by a new Hong Kong cultural center (they are building a thirty-story high rise to give the hotel a view once again), it is a superb hotel. After three weeks in China, most of us decided simply to enjoy the Peninsula Hotel that evening. We arranged to go out for a Cantonese dinner, which was very good, but our appetite for Chinese food was just about burned out. Indeed, shortly after our arrival in Hong Kong we discovered a McDonalds a block away from the Peninsula Hotel, and we had a Big Mac to remind us of the U.S.



Civilization ... a room at the Penninsula ... and even McDonalds tastes good!

The next day was a muggy and overcast day in Hong Kong. We took the ferry to Hong Kong Island and then the tram up to Victoria Peak. Even in the clouds the views were spectacular. However, the heat and humidity was so oppressive that even this short trip almost wiped us out for the rest of the day.





An outing in Hong Kong



The Hong Kong skyline



Well, have you had enough?

In the late afternoon we convened in the Rogels' suite in the Regent Hotel, across from the Peninsula, which had superb views overlooking the bay.



The Rogels' party at the Regent Hotel

We had a discussion among the group to assess the trip, to gather ideas for the further support of the China Center, and suggestions for follow-up. The consensus of all was that it was the trip of a lifetime and certainly accomplished all of our objectives. It had gained a very strong commitment of all of the participants toward the sustained support of the UM Center for Chinese Studies. It was also the belief of the group that we should try to have similar events in the years ahead, but that we really had to look for opportunities to add significant intellectual value to such trips with the use of University faculty.

In the evening the group split into two, half going to the French restaurant in the Peninsula, Gaddi's, and the others going to the Chinese restaurant, the China Moon. Neither restaurant was more than one-third full, suggesting that tourist activity is really down in Hong Kong, at least at this time of the year.

The next day was devoted to relaxed explorations of Hong Kong and Kowloon. In the morning we went to a Chinese arts and crafts center to look for gifts for Ann Arbor folks, and then in the afternoon we wandered around looking at the extraordinary industrial development of Hong Kong. Late in the afternoon we had "high tea" at the Peninsula, an Asian tradition for almost a century. Anne felt it was only "mamahuhu"--or so, so in Chinese--more of an experience than a gourmet delight.





Tea at the Peninsula ... as advertised



And as experienced by the Duderstadts ...

At 5:30 p.m. we were picked up by a coach arranged by Fred Lui, president of the UM Alumni Club of Hong Kong, and taken to the Fukura Hotel on Hong Kong Island for a wonderful reception and dinner attended by over fifty alumni and twenty-five students and their parents.



A reception by the UM Alumni Club of Hong Kong



Meeting Hong Kong alumni and students



Ron and Bob



Dinner with the Hong Kong alumni

Once again, Michigan's worldwide presence was apparent when we saw Herb and Dee Hildebrandt in the crowd. Herb is Professor of Business Administration and works with Hong Kong companies on business opportunities in China. Even from this short evening it was clear that Hong Kong represents an enormous opportunity for the University of Michigan. We currently have over one hundred-fifty students from Hong Kong enrolled at the University and over three hundred alumni enlisted on the rolls of the University of Michigan alumni club in Hong Kong alone, with actual alumni concentration estimated at several times that. Further, it was clear that Hong Kong is becoming the real entry point to China and will continue to be the bridge for the west into this fascinating country well into the twenty-first century.

### The Return and Concluding Remarks

After an early morning wake-up (again 5:00 a.m.), we were ferried by the Peninsula's Rolls Royces to the Hong Kong airport, and after the usual airport gymnastics (including a \$30 per person airport tax), we boarded a Northwest 747-400 for the flight to Narita and connections to another non-stop flight to Detroit.





Breakfast in the room



A pain in the neck, you say?



Anne's ready to go.



Off to Tokyo



... and on to Detroit

Interestingly enough, the co-pilot of the Northwest flight was an attractive blond woman, apparently the only 747-400 woman pilot in the world--at least thus far. The flight from Hong Kong to Narita was comfortable, and it turned out that the same plane was used for the connecting flight on to Detroit. All in all, it was a twenty-two hour trip from the hotel to Ann Arbor, or measured in airline terms, four movies and five meals.



Never thought Northwest would look good.

Some general observations on China and the trip: The size of China is truly difficult for westerners to comprehend--1.2 billion people, 25 percent of the earth's population, and growing very, very rapidly. The West has had great difficulties with the Chinese government, particularly with its stance on human rights. But as Ambassador Roy put it, a case can be made that we should be thankful to Deng Xiaoping and crew for just feeding, clothing, and housing this population without destroying the neighboring territories or drawing on the resources of the world.

Much of the great challenge before China, however, is how to handle this population. Population growth continues at a rapid pace, particularly in rural areas. Further, there is a great deal of concern about the stability of the Chinese government following the departure of Deng from the scene.

One hears reference to the legacy of the Yellow River syndrome--that China has always been an inward directed society--which explains in part why the rest of the world moved past China in 1400 and once again during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese today realize more than ever that they have no choice but to integrate economically in the world community, but they intend to accomplish this without significant change in political structure in such a way as to destabilize their society.

The real problem is how to manage 1.2 billion people during a time of rapid change. China is a society without strong internal values, no real religion, with only government to provide rules and orders based upon power. Without the emperors or dictators, the society has nothing to hold it together, to rein in corruption. Today the topsy-turvy nature of wealth in China in which street vendors and shopkeepers make many times that of professionals such as professors and doctors is driving a frenzy of corruption with nothing to resist it. This absence of fundamental values appears to differentiate China from Japan and Korea, where rigid social structures subvert the needs of the individual to those of society as a whole. In contrast, Chinese society is based on local



networks, families, friends, work colleagues, but with little commitment to society as a whole. As a result, the Chinese sometimes appear cruel and uncaring to "humanity," while showing great warmth and affection to those in their own networks. The Chinese people have a capacity for great brutality, indeed it is estimated that over 15 million people perished under Mao Tse-tung! In a sense, the size of the population overwhelms the concern for human life.

Yet, the Chinese people show great affection and interest in the United States and clearly look to us as a key to the rapid modernization of their economy. Further, the opportunities for the United States--and the University of Michigan--in China are extraordinary. It clearly must be regarded as a priority in the years ahead.