



Foto nr.: 2



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Giant Panda

Giant Panda

From China, giant panda is generally acknowledged as one of the rarest animals in the world distributing only in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi provinces. Its number is dropping day by day, a historical trend that giant pandas are facing out.

In 1961 when the World Wildlife Fund was set up, it selected the image of giant panda as its emblem.

Giant panda belongs to neither bear family nor has no relations with any other animals. Its unique statue, giant panda belongs to the family of carnivorous order

under the class of mammals. Although a carnivore, giant panda has changed into a vegetarian with bamboo as the staple food.

Giant panda is an alpine animal dwelling in hilly bamboo in primitive forests at an altitude from 1,500 meters to 3,500 meters above sea level, which has less human action and humid air. With an uncommunicative and eccentric disposition, giant panda likes to live a solitary existence and does not like to live in groups. It is active during the day and slow movement at night. The docile giant panda never initiatively attacks people or other animals. The giant panda is fond of climbing up trees and swimming. It has neither a habit of hibernation nor a regular lair to

sleep or rest. A great eater of bamboo, a panda consumes 10 to 20 kilograms of bamboo in a day. Giant pandas are in heat and mate from late spring to early summer. They give birth to one baby at a time. The baby panda is feeble and easily dies young after birth. It can stand up in three months and live independently in half a year. A panda usually lives for 15 years. At present, the number of giant pandas totals 1,000. With adverse weather, bamboo booms, bamboo fruit and withers in cycles thus affecting the existence of panda and bringing about disastrous consequences locally. For years, China has adopted measures to protect giant pandas in an all-round way.

Foto nr.: 12

百年來
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Foto nr.: 13

Brown-Eared Pheasant

Brown-eared Pheasant

Brown-eared pheasant belongs to eared pheasant genus in the tragopan family. Such genus consists of white-eared, brown-eared and blue-eared pheasants, all native to China. With the smallest number, the brown-eared pheasant distributes only in north Hebei and northwest Shanxi provinces. It is listed for top protection by the Chinese Government and has aroused world's attention. It has been listed first category animal under the protection by the Convention on International Trade in

Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna. The image of the brown-eared pheasant is included in the emblem of the World Pheasant Association.

Large in size, the brown-eared pheasant weights about 2,500 grams each. It is difficult to distinguish a male pheasant from female one through their appearance. As most of the feathers are brown, the bird was called "He" by ancient Chinese, and tragopan or eared pheasant by foreigners because it has a handful of white feather behind its ears stretching up to its head looking like two horns or erecting ears. The reason why the brown-eared pheasant is also called "horse pheasant" is because it always holds up its tail feathers, which are long and large just like a fluffy horse tail.

Brown-eared pheasants live in the woods at an altitude from 1,000 meters to

2,500 meters above sea level around.

They are not skilled in long flying but good at running as they are strong.

Late spring is the breeding season of brown-eared pheasants. During this time there are often fights between male pheasants to seize a female partner.

As a result of long-time hunting and exporting brown-eared pheasants in large quantity and damaging their habitats, the number has declined sharply and is on the verge of extinction.

In recent years, the number of the rare bird is increasing steadily. Various surveys by ornithologists and setting up reserves to protect brown-eared pheasants by the Ministry of Forestry.



Foto nr.: 14



中國古典文學名著 《三國演義》

《三國演義》是元末明初羅貫中所著的一部歷史演義小說。它描寫和反映了從漢靈帝建寧二年(169年)到晉武帝太康元年(280年)之間的歷史事件，以魏、蜀、吳三國的興衰為中心，以封建統治階級內部的種種政治鬥爭和軍事鬥爭為重點，塑造了諸葛亮、曹操、劉備、關羽、張飛等一系列具有典型意義的人物形象。形象地概括了廣闊而豐富的社會歷史內容。小說文字淺近，結構宏大，人物眾多，情節曲折，是我國歷史小說中的著名作品。它所描繪的人物和故事，長期以來在我國人民群眾生活中有着深遠的影響。

Foto nr.: 15



Foto nr.: 16



Rare Magnolia Liliflora



珍稀濒危木兰科植物

珍稀濒危木

木蘭是世界稀有植
稀品種僅分佈在我國的
、貴州、湖北、湖南等
。由於這些品種數量稀
瀕危植物。

木蘭為著名的觀賞
藥，它優美的花型、香
花味和碩大的花朵一直
是一種很有發展前途的
種。

郵票圖案所描繪的
境內的名貴木蘭。

Magnolia liliflora
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Hunan Provinces in C
number of them still
recognized as endang

Magnolia liliflor
namental plant. The
showy flowers give th
pearance, and it has
ated by people. The
be used as medicine.
type of tree with uses
both for landscaping

All of the Mag
on the stamps are
ones that distributed

Foto nr.: 17

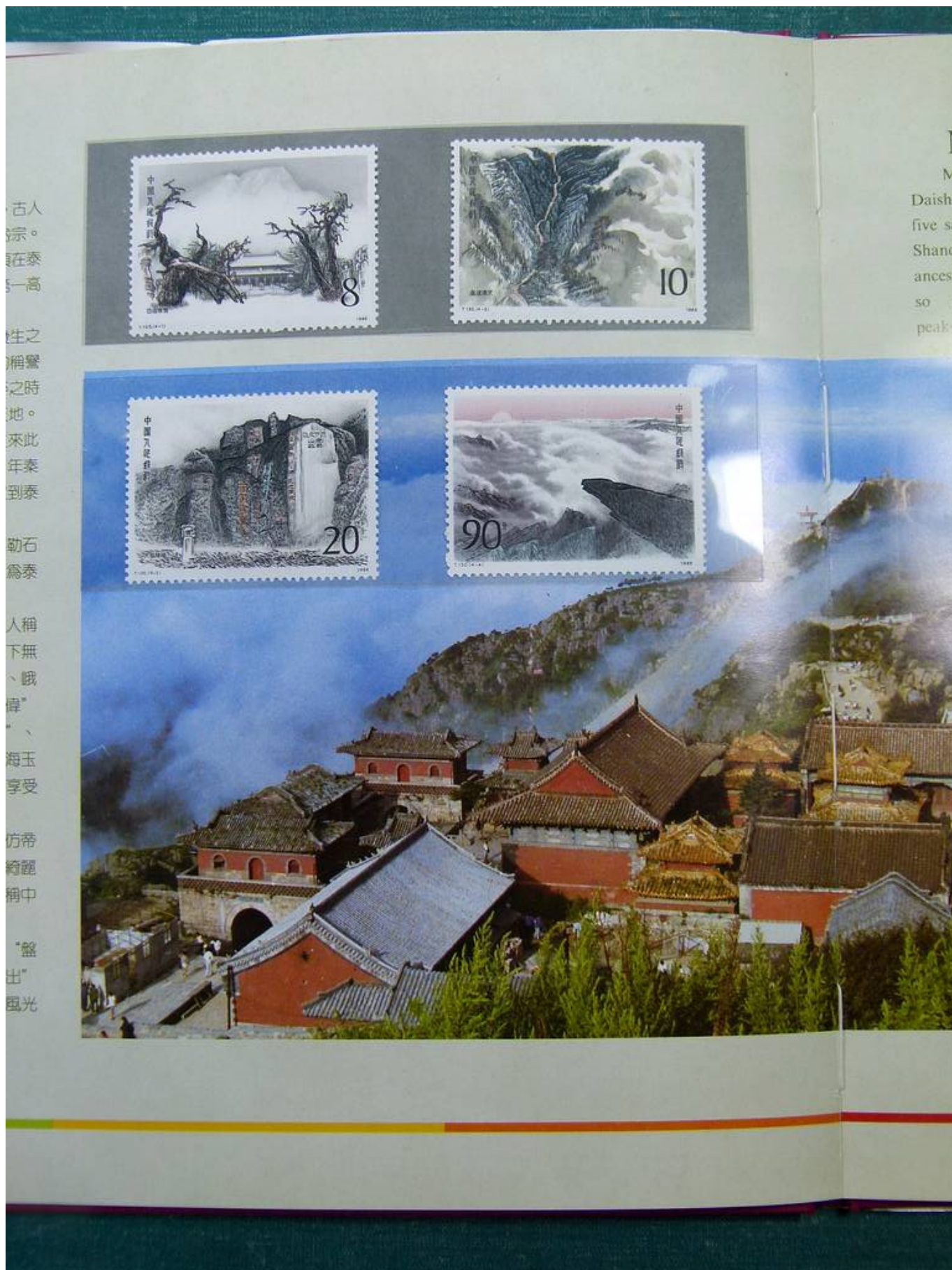


Foto nr.: 18

Pere David's Deer

Milu, or Pere David's Deer, belongs to artiodactyl mammals in the family Cervidae. Large in size, a deer is two meters long, 1.2 meters high and weighs 250 kilograms. It is brown of coat with light colour in the chest and stomach and has long tail with thick hair and large hoofs. A male deer grows antlers, of which the front one has branches. Milu is known as "Si Bu Xiang" (four unlike animals). Its antlers look like deer's neck like camel's tail like donkey's and hoofs like ox's. But the animal does not belong to any of these species. Milu is also called Pere David's Deer because it was discovered by a French Catholic priest, Pere David, for the first time and then introduced to Europe.

Native to China, Milu already has been extinct in the wild. Although zoologists are interested in the study of the peri-

od when the species died out, they can collect enough historical materials to prove it. According to the unearthed fossils of Milu and its sub-species, Milu originated in northern China and boomed in China in late Pleistocene. The milu hunting, reclamation of farmland and change of natural conditions caused Milu to vanish hundreds of years ago.

Fortunately, Chinese ancestors collected and domesticated such animal in great numbers just before their extinction. The last of Milu were raised in the Nanhai Hunting Range specially for emperors. At the end of the 19th century, there were 120 Milu in the range. However, a flock of Milu all died out by the 1900 as a result of years of fighting, moils, floods and earthquakes.

Eventually, the 11th duke of Bedford was fond of raising animals and had collected 18 Milu in his large manor in Woburn Abbey, England between 1884 and 1900.

According to the 1982 statistics, Milu was raised in 119 places of 25 countries. The number topped 1,100.

In 1956, the British Zoology Society sent two pairs of Milu to China. Nine years ago, a batch of British-raised Milu returned to their homeland—Nanhai, Beijing and began new life. Some of them raised baby Milu. The Chinese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has set a set of special stamps on Milu to promote its propagation.



Foto nr.: 19

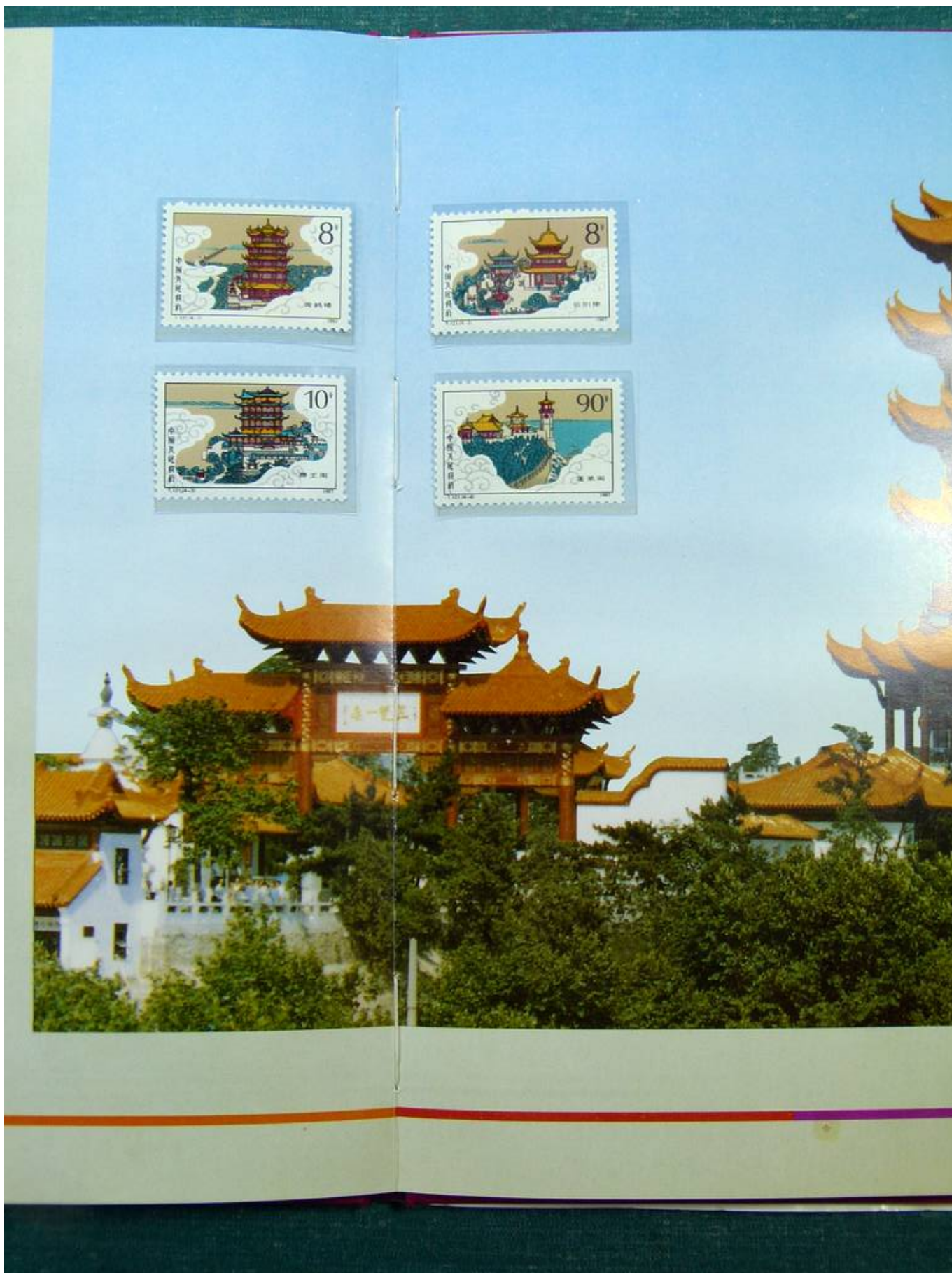


Foto nr.: 20



中國古典文學名著 《水滸傳》

在中國說到《水滸傳》是家喻戶曉、婦孺皆知。一百單八將的故事差不多都能講上幾段。

《水滸傳》反映的是北宋時期宋江領導的農民起義。明代的施耐庵、羅貫中根據宋元以來廣泛流傳的民間故事、話本、戲曲進行綜合性創作寫成的，系中國古代第一部完整地描寫農民起義全過程的長篇小說，展現了農民起義星火至燎原的過程。

“梁山泊英雄好漢排座次”是起義發展的高潮。其後，起義軍走上了受“招安”的道路，落得個英雄魂聚夢兒窪的悲慘結局。

郵票設計者擷取《水滸傳》前15回中的部分內容，以工筆重彩畫法為主，借鑒宋代繪畫造型的特長，並作了某些合理誇張，形成了第一組《水滸》郵票。其中尤以“魯智深倒拔垂楊柳”、“林冲風雪山神廟”和“智取生辰綱”膾炙人口，令人欣賞不厭。



The Outlaws of Masterpiece of Ancient



Foto nr.: 21



The Outlaws of the Marsh—A Literary masterpiece of Ancient China

The novel "Outlaws of the Marsh" is known to all in China and even women and children can tell parts of the stories about the 108 generals in this literary masterpiece of ancient China.

The novel depicts peasants' uprising headed by Song Jiang in the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127). Shi Nai'an and Luo Guanzhang in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) wrote the novel, China's first such describing the whole process of peasants' uprising on the basis of folk stories, scripts for story-telling, folk literature and dramas in the Song and Yuan dynasties.

The novel describes how Gao Qiu and Cai Jing bullied others on the strength of their powerful connections or position; how the upper influential officials committed all manner of crimes and how cruel and decadent Zhang Dujian, Jiang Menshen and other lower-class corrupt officials were. With the theme that peasants were

"driven to revolt", the novel tells the process of peasants' uprising—a single spark can start a prairie fire". The content "to offer official posts to the men and women banded together on a marsh—girt mountain in what today is Shandong Province" brought the uprising up to the peak and then the insurrectional army began to accept amnesty and serve the ruler and came to a miserable upshot.

With traditional Chinese realistic painting characterized by fine brushwork and close attention to detail, the stamp designer used the painting and modelling of the Song Dynasty for reference and made reasonable artistic exaggeration to develop the first series of stamps on "Outlaws of the Marsh" on the basis of the first 16 chapters of the novel. Included are "Sagacious Lu, the Tattooed Monk, uproots a willow tree", "Lin Chong shelters from the snowstorm in the Mountain Spirit Temple" and "Capturing the Birthday Gift (treasures) by Ruse" which enjoy great popularity.



Foto nr.: 22



壁畫

世聞名的古代東方藝術。藝術不可多得的瑰寶。甘肅省玉門關外，是重要衝。敦煌莫高窟開（公元366年），歷經十、北周、隋、唐、五代現存 486 窟，塑像兩千平方米，可以構成高兩部。壁畫內容以佛、菩薩成連環畫的形式表現表現世俗生活的佳

畫是按歷史年代編組。畫從中窺見敦煌壁畫發

第二組選取於西魏和反映了當時人的生產生活寬廣，具有濃厚的生活人，筆觸簡煉、概括現手法以民族傳統繼承交流的痕迹，畫風正雄傳向既有磅礴的氣向轉變的過程中。



Foto nr.: 23



Foto nr.: 24



Foto nr.: 25



Five Prominent Peak



A Distance View from
the Top of Mt. Hua

*In the lightening sky I went out alone following no path,
In and out, up and down, penetrating fog and mist,
Rosy mountains and jade streams in glistening confusion.
Then I saw pines and oaks ten spans around,
And stepped on the stones in the current with my bare feet,
With the sound of rushing water and the wind in my clothes.
If life were like this I would be happy;
Why must I be restrained by other men's fetters?
Alas, my friends and colleagues,
Can it be that in old age I shall never return?*

Han Yu (768-823)

As early as two thousand years ago the Mt. Hua was recognized as one of the five great mountains of China. One hundred twenty kilometers east of the ancient city of Xi'an, it is famous for its sheer cliffs and precipices. Countless poets and scholars have tried to capture its awesome grandeur.

Five peaks are most prominent: the North, South, East, West, and Middle Peaks. The South Peak is the tallest at 2,100 meters and is visible only from the North Peak. Indeed to reach any of the other four one must start the climb at the foot of the North Peak.

Yuquan Garden (Jade Fountain Garden) is the starting point. Yu Yi, a scholar of the tenth century, was said to have lived here as a hermit, having escaped officialdom for the seclusions of Mt. Hua. He sleeps here today, a reclining statue in the temple dedicated to him. The mountain path is rough; the rigors of the first stretch — "18 Bends" — is made possible only by occasional pauses to savor the surrounding mountain scenery. The Eighteen Bends leads to a small basin. From here on, the climb becomes ever more perilous. Imperial Court officials who made the climb in sedan chairs would end their trip here.

Two words carved into a nearby rock warn: "Turn Back." The steepness of the path ahead of the steps leading upward look like a ladder hanging over the cliff. Only those who choose to face the challenge with strength and courage continue their climb. Only they can enjoy the supreme beauty of Mt. Hua.

The path upward is almost perpendicular. Steps were cut into the rock face by travelers who climbed here through the centuries. Ropes and chains have been installed for support. The crevice of "Thousand Steps Precipice" is only wide enough for one person to pass through at a time. Farther on is another flight of 570 stone steps. Cut out of the solid rock is "Laojun's Furrow". Laojun, an immortal in Chinese mythology, is said to have been so moved by the suffering of the people burdened by taxes that one night he ploughed out a path with his magic plough. The plough was said to have hung on a rocky hook on the North Peak. Beyond the "Furrow" is the "Monkey's Frown," a dangerously steep

Foto nr.: 26



Thousand Feet Precipice



Blue Dragon Ridge

cent that causes even monkeys to gaze upon it with hesitation. Conquer this obstacle and the North Peak greets you with open arms at 1,520 meters.

A single "Blue Dragon Ridge" links the North Peak with the four others. Only two or three feet wide, sheer cliffs drop away for thousands of feet on either side. The path narrows at times so that to go forward along "Ear Touching Cliff", for instance, you must literally cling to the side of the precipice. Finally, in a depression at the foot of Middle Peak with East, West and South Peaks almost surrounding you on three sides you can pause to rest in safety.

On the East Peak, on a plateau called the "Peak of the Morning Sun", the sunrise is especially magnificent. The face of a cliff here has five yellowish streaks running vertically from top to bottom, and from a distance they are like the fingers of a hand. Legend has it that Mt. Hua was originally linked to another mountain, but they blocked the flow of the Yellow River. To make a path for the waters the Gods of Rivers separated the mountains leaving the "God's Hand" as a handiwork of the precipice. And so it is called "God's Hand". This natural phenomenon can also be explained by geological principles. The weathering and temperature fluctuations caused fissures in the rock, where small furrows gradually formed through erosion by water. Minerals in the granite, dissolved in the water, tinted the rock yellow. On the southeastern slope of East Peak is a small rise flattening at the crest. This is the "Chess Terrace". The King of Qin was said to have once played chess here with a god. A more reliable record tells of Emperor Taizu of the Song dynasty playing chess here with the hermit Xi Yi and in so doing losing Mt. Hua to him. A dainty pavilion sits here on the terrace.

West Peak is also called "Lotus Peak". At over two thousand meters it is second only to South Peak in height. In beauty, West Peak is second to none. A large stone marks the locale of "Lotus Lantern". The fairy tale is about a scholar, Liu Yanchang, and the goddess whom he met one day on the road. They fell in love, married and had a child whom they named Chenxiang. By marrying a mortal, however, the goddess violated the laws of Heaven and for this she was punished: crushed under Mt. Hua. Chenxiang grew up. Determining to rescue his mother, he split the mountain in two with a magic axe given to him by a kind fairy. The goddess was freed. The stone here today bears a mark of the axe.

Mt. Hua's highest South Peak is cut off from its fellows by a fault. At the very top is a pool of water: "Looking Up to Heaven Pond". Standing here you can touch the sky and pick the stars. Clouds swirl around at your feet and the sighing of pines rises to your ear like the sound of the ocean. All the mountains dwindle in size. In the distance

Foto nr.: 27



Mt. Tai Temple



The Ladder to Heaven

the Yellow River flows from the sky.

Mt. Tai, the Sacred Mountain of the East, was the most revered of five sacred mountains (of the east, west, north, south, and center) recognized by Chinese since ancient times. It stands at the edge of the mountainous region of central Shandong on the southern perimeter of the North China Plain.

In 110 B.C. the Han emperor Wudi, "the Martial Emperor," came to Mt. Tai seeking some sign of Heaven's sanction for his reign. His plan was to perform the mysterious *feng* and *shan* sacrifices, august ceremonies designed to report the success of the dynasty to Heaven and Earth and to secure their blessing on its continued prosperity. It was believed that Yu the Great himself had performed such ceremonies here on Mt. Tai and that hardly more than a century before Wudi's reign, the First Emperor of the Qin dynasty, who had unified China for the first time in history, had come here to repeat them. It was also said that long before the Qin, Confucius, whose home at Qufu is not far from the south of Mt. Tai once climbed the mountain and from its summit viewed the smallness of the world below.

Not only a way to approach Heaven, the mountain itself was venerated as a deity and over the centuries acquired a historical and religious aura associated with the many shrines and temples built on its slopes, which made it an important goal for pilgrims seeking spiritual and material favors as well as for emperors seeking religious sanction. The important temples associated with the mountain are all Taoist, and it was to them that the pilgrims were attracted; but the ceremonies the emperors performed were believed to be related to the primary Confucian values of political harmony and order, and reverence for the mountain as a source of moral stability and continuity was shared by Confucian and Taoist alike.

Pilgrims began their ascent from the great temple, the Daimiao, on the southern flank of Mt. Tai in the town of Taian. The temple is now dominated by an immense central hall, said to be the third of the three great temple buildings in China after the Imperial Palace in Beijing and the Confucian temple in Qufu. Though the present temple did not exist when Wudi came to Mt. Tai, the emperor had six cypress trees planted on the site in honor of the mountain. These remain, in a small garden courtyard to the right of the main gate, their huge twisted trunks and silver-grey bark witnessing to their age.

As much in honor of the old cypresses themselves as of the one who planted them, Wudi's distant successor the Qianlong emperor of the Qing dynasty erected a set of three steles depicting the trees. The main courtyard of the temple is filled with other old evergreens, and several ginkgo trees seven hundred years old stand behind the main hall. Of

Foto nr.: 28



Daguang Peak



Sun Watching Peak

trees are especially revered for their longevity (*shou*) and endurance (*ren*), among those traits most prized by the Chinese. Trees establish a kind of living filial continuity with the past, where so much else is ephemeral. In the same way, Mt. Tai gained significance not only as a symbol of endurance and stability, which all mountains were, but as a repository of the cumulative historical memories of centuries of visitors who honored it and commemorated their visits here.

In Han times Mt. Tai was still a wild area and a forbidding ascent. The mountain's summit is now reached by an arduous climb of about seven thousand steps. Along the way are gates across the path to mark its stages and pavilions by its side where one may rest and admire the view. For many pilgrims the progress to the top was a kind of allegorical spiritual elevation, beginning with the First Gate of Heaven at the base, through the Middle Gate of Heaven at the midpoint, and ending with the South Gate of Heaven at the summit. The climb becomes more precipitous as one confronts the final ascent, a flight of a thousand steps up to the South Gate of Heaven, which is awesomely at the top of a gorge running up to show the way, but is still some way from the true summit.

At South Gate to Heaven, the last stone archway before reaching the top, a blast of wind makes appropriate these lines from a poem (701–762), celebrated poet of the Tang dynasty:

*Soughing at the Gate of Heaven
Fresh winds from ten thousand li.*

Carved in the rocks all along the path are inscriptions honoring the mountain and commemorating the famous scholars, poets, official emperors whose visits span more than two millennia. Some inscriptions merely announce the name of a place, point out an interesting scene, or exhort the climber in his effort. Others, poems in praise of the mountain and bold encomiums by ambitious emperors, are signed by their authors. More than halfway up, on a massive cliff across a canyon, a colossal inscription, the "Ten-Thousand-Foot Stele," ordered by the Qianlong emperor, whose towering ego matched the proportions of his dedication. Nearby the ascent is interrupted by a terrace with a pavilion and several pine trees. The First Emperor of the Qin was overtaken by a storm here on his way down from the summit in 221 BC and found shelter under a large pine tree. In gratitude he conferred on the tree the rank of an official of the fifth degree, and the title Venerable Pine, "Pine Tree of the Fifth Degree," still adheres to the place.

The steady force of the wind blowing across the peak has stunted the scrubby vegetation. The wind isolates Mt. Tai's summit from the land below like an island of abandoned solitude. A large Temple of the Goddess, its rusted brown roof tiles made of cast iron to withstand the elements, sits in a sheltered depression just below the summit. Dedicated to the "Princess of the Colored Clouds," the temple was the principal

Foto nr.: 29



Temple of Serving the Country



Chinese Toon Terrace



Sound of Thunder Temple

and prosperity. Yet they sensed some insecurity in their power, successors would lose what they had achieved or preserved, and the of disintegration were already visible to those who cared to Xuānzong presided over a brilliant court celebrated for its refinement and patronage of the arts, but his reign ended in tragic rebellion and dedication. Wudi's successors succumbed to bitter factional struggle economic crisis. The First Emperor's conquest barely outlasted though he proclaimed it for ten thousand generations.

Mt. Emei in Sichuan Province is famous in China for its magnificent snow-capped peaks, its ground caves and for its rivulets, waterfalls and forests. The former Buddhist sanctuary lies about 100 kilometers from the capital of Sichuan Province. Its highest peak is 3,000 meters above sea level.

Taoist temples have been built on the mountain since the Eastern Han Dynasty (2nd century), and the first Buddhist temple at the end of the 1st century until the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. Buddhist temples were constructed here. These temples housed thousands of Buddhist monks. The mountain became a place for pilgrimages from all over the country. Worshipers would several days to make the ascent, stopping for the night in one of the numerous temples or monasteries.

Climbers start their ascent of Mt. Emei at Baoguo Temple, ly constructed in the 6th century but rebuilt in the 17th. A rugged leads 63 kilometers up the mountain from Baoguo Temple to Summit, named after a glistening bronze hall that once crowned the main peak of Mt. Emei. The splendid view offered from the 3,100-meter-high Golden Summit, pinnacle of Mt. Emei, is worth the climb. From here one can see overlapping mountaintops near. Dawn and the morning star generally see clouds gradually and redden in the east. Then suddenly fiery bright clouds part and sun bursts forth to begin the day. The mountains are instantly in sunlight and crimson clouds fill the sky. By afternoon the sun's rays etrate the clouds and form a circle of violet, indigo, blue, green, orange and red lights. On the mountaintop, you feel as though you are in the circle, which moves with your shadow. This is the famed "precious light" or "Buddha's halo", which is sunlight deflected by the mountain. This "precious light" is Mt. Emei's most splendid wonder and a sacred point.

The breathtaking view from the top of Mt. Emei has for centuries been a source of inspiration to painters and poets, including the Tang Dynasty poet, Li Bai (701-762), who wrote that "Emei is more beautiful than the western heaven." Its high cliffs and peaks are often shrouded in mist.

Foto nr.: 30





Elephant Bath Pool



Mist-enshronded Nunnery



Golden Summit

clouds and mist. Throughout spring and summer, the mountain is covered and petted by rhododendrons of various kinds and colors.

Climbers usually descend on the other side of the mountain, following the northern path, which is wide and easy to follow, and stop to visit at Wannian (Ten-Thousand-Year) Temple, another cultural relic preserved on Mt. Emei. Here is the Samantabhadra Hall, built of brick in the 16th century. Its roof is tiled and the walls are square. The eaves, lintels and ceiling are decorated with elegant designs in color. Within the Hall towers a huge statue of Samantabhadra mounted on a white elephant. Cast in the Song Dynasty, it is 9 meters high and weighs 62 tons – an ample example of the fine technique of ancient Chinese art.

Towering beautifully and majestically above the Yangtze River, with the Yangtze River winding around its base, is Lushan, its peaks rising high into the sky and with its natural formations.

At the foot of this mountain, a vast area of about 100 square kilometers is the Guling area, a beautiful resort. A winding mountain highway leads up to the mountain. Here, at an altitude of 1,100 meters, the temperature is 5°C (50 ° F.), cooler than in the valley below. Even in the heat of summer, the average temperature is a comfortable 22.6°C. Guling is the ideal vacation spot with hotels and restaurants, shops and the visitor to Mt. Lushan. It is at Guling that the highway exploration begins.

At times, strolling down the streets of this garden city, the sky suddenly darkens, while clouds wrap the streets and hide the view. In a short time, however, sunlight reclaims the view and the clouds are gone. The guide will explain to you that Mt. Lushan is cloudy six months out of the year. The masses of water vapor from the Yangtze River and Poyang Lake meet the cooler mountain air and condense into clouds and mists.

"The Flowerpath", so named for the many blossoms along the way, leads you to an elegant umbrella-shaped pavilion with a stone tablet. In the pavilion is a stone tablet with the inscription "The Peach Blossom Mountain" which is believed to have been done by the noted poet and statesman Bai Juyi. It is said that not far from this pavilion he wrote a poem expressing his admiration for the peach blossoms on the mountain. More than a thousand years ago Bai Juyi visited Mt. Lushan. One day in the late spring he ascended Mt. Lushan and was surprised to find the peach blossoms in full bloom when the peach blossoms of the mountain had already withered. In his delight he wrote the poem "The Flowerpath".

A park here has a greenhouse where over 500 kinds of flowers are grown.

Foto nr.: 31



Sunlit Peak



Hanpo Pass



Stone and Pines

cultivated. Among the more unusual species is "A Touch of Fragrance", a blossom that does not emit perfume. But touch its leaves and you will find your hand has been scented. The "Itch Tree" is another botanical curiosity. It quivers when you touch the bark as though you had tickled it.

Not far away from Guling, on a cliff 1,050 meters above sea level, is Immortal's Cavern where, according to legend, Lü Dongbin cultivated himself and became one of the Eight Immortals who displayed his prowess by crossing the sea. Walk through a round stone gate near the cavern, descend a stone staircase and you come to a rock in the shape of a toad. Beside it stands a lone pine tree venerable in its old age. A trail along the cliff will lead you to the cavern which is twenty meters high, eight meters wide and seven meters deep. The top of the cavern is cone-shaped and a part of the rock resembles a hand. This is "Buddha's Hand". Inside Immortal's Cavern the air becomes cooler, and at its lowest point you hear the sound of water dripping from crevices in the rocky wall. This water forms a pool which is called "One Drop Spring". For ten centuries this water has dripped into the pool and never overflows. Nor will this crystal clear water overflow from the pool even if filled to the brim. A coin placed on the surface will float for centuries ago were moved to inscribe verses on the cavern walls: "Clear spring water flows eternally from the rocks," "Water drips through the ages in the mountain." Cloud Tea brewed with this spring water is rich, mellow and refreshing. Sit beside Immortal's Cavern in the shade of a big tree sipping this elixir of Mt. Lushan and you are sure to enjoy the strange rock and cloud formations and the evergreen trees, including many redwoods, of this idyllic mountain resort.

Sunrise at Hanpo Pass rewards the early riser. Situated between two peaks mid-way of a ridge in the southeastern part of Mt. Lushan, the Pass overlooks Poyang Lake. To the northeast stands Five Old Men Peak. As its name suggests, the Peak resembles five old men sitting shoulder to shoulder. Are they too awaiting the sunrise? As the mist disperses, Poyang Lake appears mirror-like in the early morning light. Gradually the sun's rays further disperse the mist and casts a red glow over the white clouds above and the lake below. The river, fields and villages, and Five Old Men Peak are bathed in brilliant morning light.

Finally, descend from the mountain to view the many spectacular waterfalls of Mt. Lushan. Yuyuan roars like thunder. Yulian dances as the water falls like white pearls. One waterfall cascades in three giant steps. Drive to Xiufeng in the southeastern area of Mt. Lushan to Mawei or Horse Tail waterfall. Before you is an array of summits, among them twin peaks thrusting like a pair of swords into the sky, and an "incense burner", with clouds curling around it like smoke. The water flowing from above is split by these peaks into two waterfalls. Great

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Five-veteran Peak



Yellow Dragon Pool



Three-layer Spring



Dragon-head Cliff

Horse Tail and Little Horse Tail. From a distance the water falling several hundred meters looks like dazzling white silk hanging from the precipice.

Mt. Huang, the "Yellow Mountains" in the lower Yangtze valley, China's cultural heartland from the tenth century on, is one of China's best-known scenic spots, celebrated for having all the wonders of mountain scenery: strange contorted pines, marvelous towering rocks, crystal-clear mountain springs and sea of clouds surrounding mountain peaks. According to legend, several thousand years ago the Yellow Emperor helped his friend to prepare herbal medicine here and so the mountain was named Mt. Huang.

Mt. Huang might have been the model for many Chinese landscape painters. They were a favorite attraction of scholars, poets, and artists, who admired their "Three Wonders." Rocks and peaks, pines and streams, clouds and mists were the essential ingredients of Chinese landscape paintings.

Even such mountains as these did not escape the penetration of bureaucratic order and discipline. Flights of stone steps wind their way through narrow defiles from peak to peak, and visitors on holiday outings are required to stop at every choice spot admiring the strange rocks and trees. In the view, every feature along the way has its name—"the monkey view," "the sea of clouds," "a dog baying at the moon," "the rock that flew here," even "the shoes of an immortal drying in the sun." Thus minutely ordered and labeled, nature even here has been restrained and formalized, brought into the familiar human order.

Mt. Huang's peaks are fascinating. As the saying goes: "Without reaching Jade Screen Pavilion, a panoramic view of the mountain is impossible; without climbing Tiandu (Heavenly Capital) Peak, your trip is in vain."

Jade Screen Pavilion, 1,680 meters above sea level, is known as the "Jade Screen of Heaven". It offers an excellent view of the whole mountain. A unique experience here is to watch white cloud masses drift below after rain, when picturesque mountain peaks, fantastic rock formations and green pines are enveloped in mist, with only their tops showing.

Tiandu Peak, at the height of 1,810 meters, is one of the three principal peaks of Mt. Huang. The climb, dangerous in the old days, is a "walk-over" today, with stone steps placed or hewn along the trail and iron chains to cling to. The three-kilometer narrow walk looks from a distance like a ladder hanging from precipitous cliffs and people climbing the ladder like a colorful moving ribbon in the mist and clouds. The path becomes still narrower near the summit, allowing only single-file passage. It takes courage indeed to look into the deep chasms below.

Foto nr.: 33



Foto nr.: 34





Foto nr.: 35



Foto nr.: 36

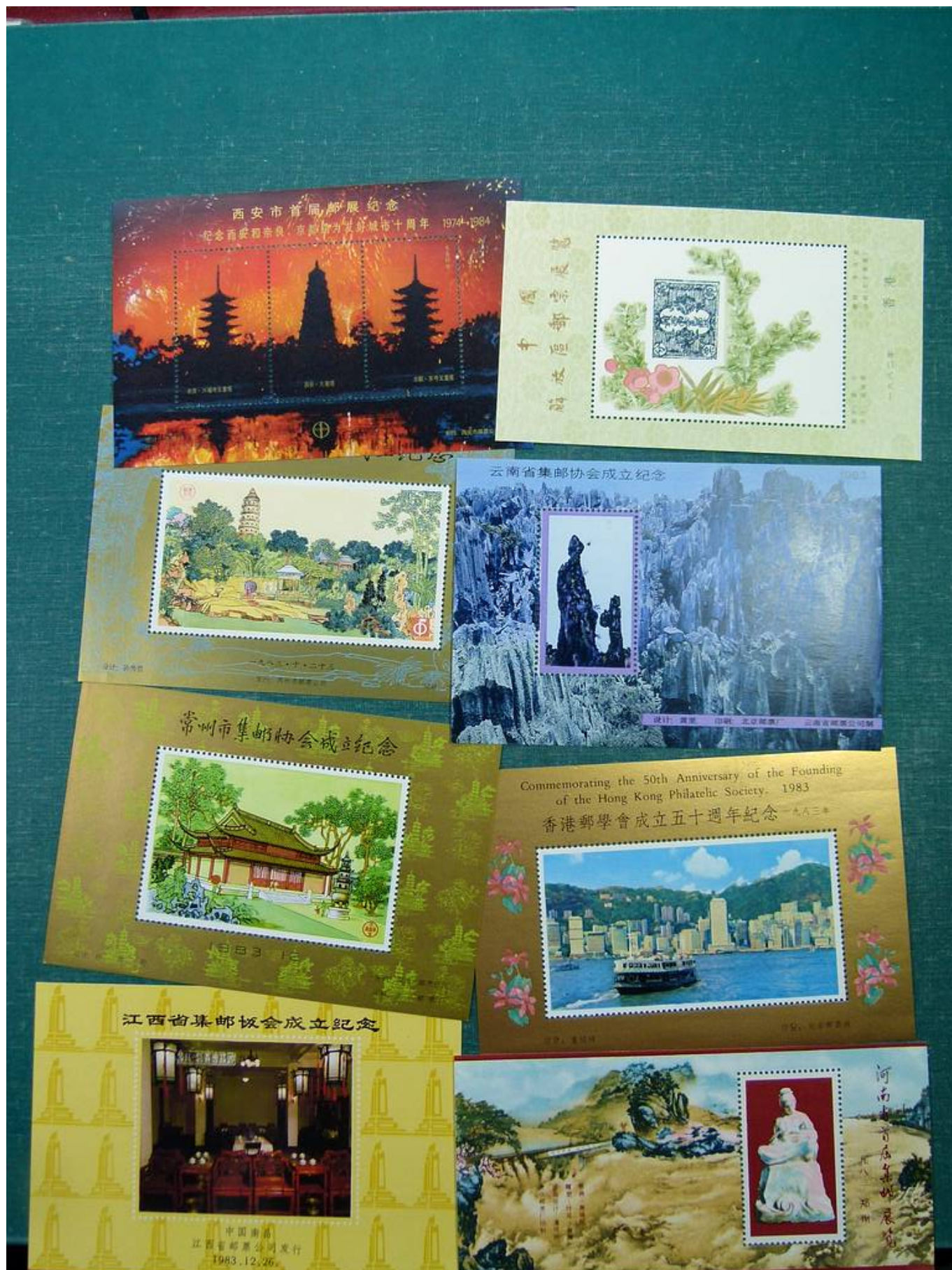


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