

## CHINA - THE AWAKENED DRAGON

How can it be that a peaceful dragon can sleep amidst the roar of so many animals around it and not be disturbed and provoked to respond in anger? As I left China in 1996 for the fourth time a thought came to my mind, *China is a sleeping dragon waking up in peace!*

The awakening of China with certainty and purpose is not a coincidence, nor is it the timing of man. The changes that have taken place in China for the past twenty years are now showing us in 2004 that it is being guided to be the greatest financial power house that the world has ever seen. China has proven its' own strategies in a global economy to others that the old norms do not work for the benefit of all, but only a few. The dragon is awake with such certainty in its eyes, it is hard to see that it ever slept. Perhaps as Einstein said, '*God does not place dice,*' it is the destiny of a great people determined by the One without days!

Growing up with two older brothers in a small rural Canadian town in a rented home in southern Ontario can have its' moments of uncertainty in one's future. Especially just after the great depression and towards the end of the second world war in 1944. As the younger sibling I would never see new clothes that were mine first. I had to fight for the share of food that belonged to me and of course always was bathed in the same water after the others would go first on Saturday night before bed. We didn't have indoor facilities and the out house was always cold and scary especially when a snake would slither by. Catalogue paper was all we had because soft paper was only for those with good paying jobs and indoor facilities. I would walk two miles to school many days in the cold passing by an elderly Chinese man's restaurant. He was always friendly to us when we entered to get warm, even with no money in our pockets.



One day he wasn't there any more and tears filled my eyes when I learned that he had no loved ones in Canada to continue his restaurant, let alone take care of settling his affairs. Little did I know at the age of seven how much the love of this elderly Chinese affected me and how I would one day visit his birthplace. You see, he had come to Canada in the late 1800's to build the Western railroads on a contract that allowed him to stay in the country, but without family. I can still remember the mysterious chatter and the smells that permeated our nostrils from his kitchen. The dark wooden floors, tables and chairs all blended together to show such a humble aged man who set in my heart a desire to travel to his home far away.



Later as a teenager I was taught by my father some of the secrets of the Chinese man. My father was intrigued by the smells and history of the cooking and it caused him to set out to understand the origins of these mysteries. He then brought a lot of Chinese culture and traditions into our home which caused my heart to grow even fonder towards a people that one day would become an integral part of my life. We grew their special vegetables in our garden and exchanged them for spices and things we could not buy. The friendship grew and we would be invited to attend special occasions where exotic foods would be stacked on joined tables at banquets fit for a king. Our Chinese friends would proudly explain their cooking and teach us the customs of the land they loved and carried in their hearts in a foreign land called Canada.

I grew to respect my new friends and to assist them among uncultured persons who would tease and mock the things they knew nothing about. The precious things of human dignity, self respect and proven values that has sustained China as a nation for many many generations longer than most in

recorded history. All of these qualities are an expression of a natural mind not known to many in today's Western world.

As I look out the window of Air China leaving this great country once again in July of 2004 after a very rewarding trip to Shijiazhuang in Hebei Province I can't help but reflect my deeper sense of understanding. I can't help but feel confident because of the even better relationships developed with our joint venture partners and the joyous times spent with old friends again. As I continue to reminisce and tap out my thoughts on a laptop computer I am reminded that now I am sixty three years old. As a young boy I did not know that the love and respect instilled in my heart for the Chinese would bring me to China for the first time at the age of 47 in 1988. Nor did I know that my travels were written in my destiny by the Ancient One.

In early 1987 I was invited to Toronto Canada from Orlando Florida to join with a spiritual colleague from London England and attend a seminar. We encouraged each other every day to continue our devotions and to visit with the One without days in prayerful early morning devotions if He would permit. On a very special morning of prayer He invited me into His presence that turned out to be a very humbling life changing experience. Through the weeping and travail of my soul, He opened a vision showing me that I would travel to China.

As I looked at the vision of a ricksha drawn by a Chinese looking man I noticed that I was sitting in it. I then noticed that many Chinese were around me attending to my needs and that they were very concerned for my comfort. As the vision closed and I began to ponder the meaning of such an encounter with the Ancient One, I told my dear friend from London with confidence, *'I am going to China!'*

But I didn't know anyone in China and my purpose of going was not known, especially when at that time my finances could not support such a trip, yet in my spirit some how some way I knew I would leave soon for China. Sure enough, within three months of my visit to Toronto I was introduced to a Chinese by a mutual lawyer friend. We became friends and one day he asked, *'would you assist me in China as a technical consultant?'* He had been negotiating many contracts commercially that required technical support to finish them. We would soon be scheduled to go into China! First to Hong Kong and then into Xian, Tianjin, Shanghai, Beijing, Canton and all the other industrial areas of China including Shijiazhuang Hebei which today has become the center point of my relationships in China.

Entering mainland China for the first time through Hong Kong into Xian was quiet an experience full of anxiety to say the least. We were met with snow on the ground, dim lights and a wilderness experience traveling by car from the airport to the hotel in the dark of night. I wondered when I saw the smoke rise from stoves burning coal for heat and the dim light from oil lamp lit houses with empty streets why I had come as I looked at my friend with bewilderment. He simply gave a comforting smile knowing what was ahead. I reflect to the vision and knew in my heart I was to be there. The travel to many other countries in the world had all been a preparation for China.

It wasn't long till I met with some very gracious people who put my heart at ease with their care and special treatment that I had enjoyed as a boy back home. Though I was half way around the world in a strange land, I soon began to feel at home. As the days progressed we traveled by air, land and sea into the mysteries of China which today are still unfolding before my very eyes. My new friends were surprised to see a foreign white man eating as well as they could with chop sticks and speak some of their words with a smile. Their stares of wonderment soon changed to smiles when I smiled with a nod knowing how strange I must look.

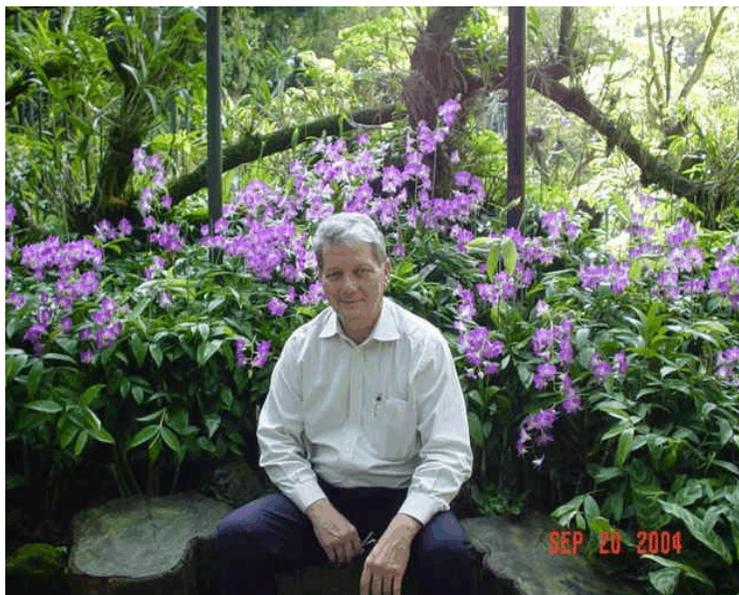
With young and old and all levels of humanity I have had the privilege around the world to discuss things from the heart, the wisdom of our patriarchs and matriarchs from generations past. When we finally part our hearts are full because of the similarity of the knowledge and wisdom that has been imparted to us. It is not hard to conclude that there is a God! an Ancient One who has shined great light on all of mankind and that some have kept it. Today He is especially shining on China!

It is pleasing to me to see the respect of the elderly in the hearts of the young as they learn from them the things of a natural mind that has kept China a united strong nation. While at the offices of our joint venture partners Hebei Tech in Shijiazhuang they introduced me to an elderly man named Mr. Li who was retired from industry. Then they introduced three young students who just graduated from school who were to sit with Mr. Li and learn all the techniques of his foundry trade. As we discussed the many issues that were needful it was not hard to see why Hebei Province has such a rich history of agriculture.



During this latest trip I visited the archeological displays in their museum at the center of Shijiazhuang and found the reason why the area had been so successful. I was amazed at the documented evidence of their early advancement. I couldn't help but notice the wrought foundry farm implements and the hinged exhibits displaying techniques used to erect strong tent frames with poles jointed together with cast hinged brass fasteners that dated prior to any other nation. With great amazement and a sense of affirmation I knew that the people of Hebei have a rich heritage that still continues today in the many foundries of the area. For certain, they have made an important contribution to mankind. From the stone age and even to today, Hebei Province is well known by serious people in the world.

In closing this short essay I find it important to note that the love imparted by the wisdom of the Ancient One has been retained by many peoples in China. To those peoples wherever they live in the earth, this is the most dominant reason for their success.



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