



GLOSSARY

Confucianism. Social mores and ethical values based on hierarchy, relationships, and obligations that are integral to Chinese culture, based on the teachings of the philosopher Kongzi (Confucius, ca. 551–479 BCE).

Cultural Revolution. From 1966 to 1976, China’s communist government directed this movement to get rid of any people, organizations, or influences that were against communism. Students were encouraged to lead the Chinese people in the search and punishment of anyone they considered to be anticommunist and teach people “correct” communist ideas and behaviors. During these ten years, many people were forced to turn in their families, friends, and neighbors for disloyalty; lost their jobs and businesses; were separated from their loved ones; and were sent to work camps.

da zi bao. A large handwritten poster about an important issue. During the Cultural Revolution, these posters were used to attack and humiliate people.

Four Olds. The Cultural Revolution was meant to destroy the Four Olds, the ways Chinese people lived before communism. The Four Olds were: Old Ideas (“uncommunist” ideas), Old Culture (for example, traditions and languages), Old Customs, and Old Habits. In reality, the Four Olds could be defined as any activity that the government didn’t like, and they were used as an excuse to attack people and destroy or appropriate their property.

guo nian. This means “celebrating the new year.” According to the lunar calendar, the Chinese New Year, which occurs during the first new moon of the year, usually falls sometime in February. New Year celebrations last for two weeks. Customs vary by region, but they always include paying homage to ancestors.

Huizhou. The traditional name of a prefecture in southeastern Anhui province, located approximately 250 miles southwest of Shanghai. Ancestral home of the Huang family and their house, Yin Yu Tang. Huizhou is known for its picturesque mountains and for a population that is historically comprised of traveling merchants. The area was officially renamed Huangshan Municipality in the 1980s, but it is still referred to as Huizhou.

LESSONS 1–3

Kongzi (ca. 551–479 BCE) (often romanized as Confucius). Kongzi was one of the most influential teachers, philosophers, and political theorists in world history. Born in the state of Lu, in what is now Shandong province in eastern China, he lived in a time of war and political upheaval and saw morality as the key to stabilizing society and government. Kongzi advocated for moral education and constant self-cultivation to promote an ethical society based on mutual respect and observance of hierarchy in social relationships. His teachings form a moral code that has been the basis of Chinese and other Asian cultures for thousands of years.

laba holiday. A celebration before Chinese New Year on the 8th day of the 12th lunar month. In Huizhou, people observe the holiday by eating a kind of rice porridge to remember the founder of Buddhism.

Mao Zedong (1893–1976) (Mao Tse-tung). Also known as Chairman Mao; the leader of the Chinese Communist Party and China from 1949 to 1976.

nianhua. Auspicious images that are hung on the front doors of homes during Chinese New Year.

Red Guards. Loyal supporters of Chairman Mao's ideas and the Cultural Revolution. The Red Guards were a popular group of high school and university students who led the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976).

aluminum oxides. Metals whose aluminum molecules are joined with oxygen molecules. For example, rubies and sapphires are mainly aluminum oxides.

china. A general term used in the West to refer to ceramic tableware, especially that made of porcelain. Porcelain was made exclusively in China until the early 18th century and was often called “chinaware” or “china” in the West.

earthenware. Clay fired at a relatively low temperature (1,200°–1,800° F) that is not watertight unless glazed or burnished.

feldspar. A group of minerals that contain aluminum and silicon.

glaze. The thin layer of glassy material applied to clay after the decorations are painted, resulting in a smooth, glossy surface. Glaze is applied either as a powder or in liquid form (a slurry of powder and water). Earthenware is made watertight by the application of glaze.

hydroxides. A group of materials that have hydrogen atoms and oxygen atoms joined together.

kiln. A very hot oven where clay is fired.

mica. A group of hydrous mineral silicates that crystallize in forms that readily separate into very thin leaves.

porcelain. White or translucent lightweight, strong pottery, made from a mixture of kaolin clay and petunze stone and fired at a very high temperature (2,300° F or higher).

Qing dynasty (Ching) (1644–1911). The last Chinese dynasty that was led by a lineage of Manchurian rulers. The first half of the dynasty is notable for geographic expansion, economic prosperity, and population growth and the latter part is known for its internal disturbances and external pressures.

silicate. A compound containing silicon, oxygen, and one or more metals.

silicate-bearing rock. A kind of rock that breaks down into clay.

silicon. One of the most abundant materials on earth, found in rocks. It is used to make computer chips and other electronic devices.

stoneware. Clay fired at a higher temperature (1,800°– 2,300° F) than earthenware, at which point it vitrifies and becomes watertight.

underglaze. The decoration or color that is put onto clay before the glaze is applied.