

Appendix F

Letter to Jiang Zemin Concerning Archaeological Sites, August 8, 1996

TO: Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, and Comrades on the Standing Committee of the Politburo

Recently, we have become aware of the situation confronting historical relics and cultural antiquities in and around the site of the Three Gorges dam project. We feel it is our duty to bring this information to the attention of the highest authorities so that this matter can be attended to by the central government.

As the largest hydroelectric project in history, the Three Gorges dam has generated worldwide interest. This has included increased attention to the issue of cultural antiquities in and around the Three Gorges dam area. This area was the site of some of the earliest civilized developments in Chinese history and contains numerous subsurface and surface cultural antiquities. It is a prime example of the rich history and culture of the Chinese people. China is one of the most important places in the history of world civilization. The entire gamut of Paleolithic and Neolithic sites which have been unearthed in the vicinity of the Three Gorges area will allow researchers to evaluate the differences between eastern and western culture in the Yangtze River Valley as well as the relationship of these cultures with nature during ancient times. There was a group of people called the Ba who were known for their skills in making war and in the arts. They once helped King Wu of the Zhou eliminate the Shang dynasty, and they later established their own kingdom which was well-known throughout history but is now extinct. The Three Gorges area is the site of the Ba people and was their primary area of activity and devel-

opment. The data uncovered so far by archaeological excavation will allow us to reconstruct the Ba Culture. But if not rescued in a timely fashion, the Ba will disappear with the construction of the reservoir—an irreversible error. In addition, various types of cultural antiquities associated with hydrology are evidence of our ancestors' attempts to utilize and control nature. Also, the long history of hydrology in the Three Gorges area is unique.

Especially important is the fact that the cultural antiquities in this area have long been tied to the area's beautiful natural scenery; the rich legacy of the area has been passed on by nature and our ancestors. It is the pride of the offspring of the Yellow Emperor. Such invaluable sites are admired at home and abroad as the jewels of Chinese civilization. For that reason, our government and engineering departments have on several occasions argued that we must do a good job in protecting these cultural antiquities so that our history and culture will continue to shine.

However, cultural antiquities preservation work is at present facing a serious challenge. As construction on the project has already begun, along with the initial stages of resettlement, some ancient graves and cultural antiquities have already been destroyed by giant earth-moving equipment. There have also been cases in which architecturally valuable sites have been destroyed in the process of resettlement. Recently, the carving known as "Conversing About Beautiful Mountains and Rivers" (*gonghua haoshanchuan*) in Badong County was dynamited. The destruction of this major relic epitomizes the dire situation confronting all cultural antiquities in the proposed reservoir area. We would especially like to note that due to the continued delay in funding the rescue effort for cultural antiquities in the Three Gorges area all efforts at rescuing the cultural antiquities have come to a halt, which will result in even more losses.

Another reason for this situation is that since the cultural antiquities departments were not directly involved in the original assessment of the Three Gorges project, it was left to other departments to determine the level of funding, based on the conditions of some 100 relic sites with which they were familiar. Based on that sparse information, these other departments also thought that the plan proposed by the cultural antiquities departments, and approved by resettlement departments, did not qualify the area as a "priority preservation site." But that conclusion was wrong. It is our understanding that the cultural antiquities departments once organized hundreds of professionals to conduct investigations and research in the reservoir area, where they discovered over twelve hundred such [impor-

tant] sites. But due to the advanced stage in the launching of the dam project and the country's [perilous] financial situation, the design of the plan for cultural antiquities preservation singled out only a select number of sites to be unearthed, relocated, and/or preserved. Take for example the case of subsurface relics. According to data provided by cultural antiquities preservation planning departments, there are 829 known subsurface sites covering 20 million square meters. But areas designated for excavation amount to less than two million square meters, or less than one-tenth of the entire area. This indicates that the current plan reflects the policy of "preservation and excavation of priority sites." Thus, accusations that the cultural antiquities departments want to extend the scope of cultural antiquities preservation and are asking for too much money are groundless.

For this reason, we advocate and hope that the central government will speed up the mobilization of resources to assess and approve policies for cultural antiquities preservation and to provide adequate funding. As is well known, approval for such a policy is very time consuming. But the construction of the dam and resettlement continue unabated. Therefore, to prevent greater losses of cultural antiquities during construction [we ask] that before these plans for cultural antiquities preservation pass through the various stages of approval monies already allotted for cultural antiquities preservation be distributed so as to ease widespread concerns about the fate of these sites. The present situation is such that sections of the dam will be conjoined next year, causing the water level to rise to 82.28 meters. The river bank in Badong County, Hubei Province will be elevated to 105.4 meters. The water level farther away from the dam site will be even higher. Based on that increase, about 130 sites will be submerged. It is already a pressing task to rescue these sites within a year. But to date, the project departments have not provided any funding for this effort, something which has caused great consternation among people in the cultural antiquities departments.

In the forty-seven years since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, cultural antiquities work has made considerable progress. We have particularly excelled at protecting cultural antiquities on sites slated for capital construction. As an important part of socialist spiritual civilization, the profound significance of cultural antiquities preservation has been given more and more attention; this will play a greater role in maintaining the spiritual bond of the Chinese nation, strengthening the unity among the offspring of the Yellow Emperor both in China and abroad, and increasing national confidence. Thus today when the central government

advocates doing a good job in the creation of a spiritual civilization, we feel that cultural antiquities preservation has even greater significance. We hope that cultural antiquities preservation in and around the Three Gorges project will be a starting point for integrating cultural antiquities preservation as part of patriotic education, increasing the understanding of the entire nation of the importance of cultural antiquities preservation, continuing the fine traditions of the Chinese nation, and strengthening the unity and inspiration of our great motherland.

As we march toward the twenty-first century and carry out modernization and achieve greater things, the burden and responsibility of preserving historical legacies and spreading the fine traditions of our culture are even greater.

Thus, at the moment when the Three Gorges cultural antiquities are about to be destroyed on a large scale, we respectfully present this letter to you in the hope that the Three Gorges project departments realize the importance of the cultural antiquities in the area and carry out rescue work jointly with cultural antiquities departments.

Signed in order:

Su Bingqi, President of the Chinese Archaeological Society, and
Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Archaeological Institute

Zhang Kaiji, Master Architect and Chief Engineer, Beijing General
Architectural Design Institute

Zheng Xiaobian, Specialist in Urban Planning

Wang Kun, Artist

Luo Zhewen, Specialist in Ancient Architecture, and Deputy Director,
China Great Wall Association

Zhou Weizhi, Artist

Zheng Siyuan, Director, China Cultural Antiquities Association

Wang Meng, Writer [former Minister of Culture]

Dan Shiyuan, Research Fellow, Palace Museum

Chai Zemin, Director, China Diplomacy Association, and Deputy Director
China Cultural Antiquities Association [former ambassador
to the United States]

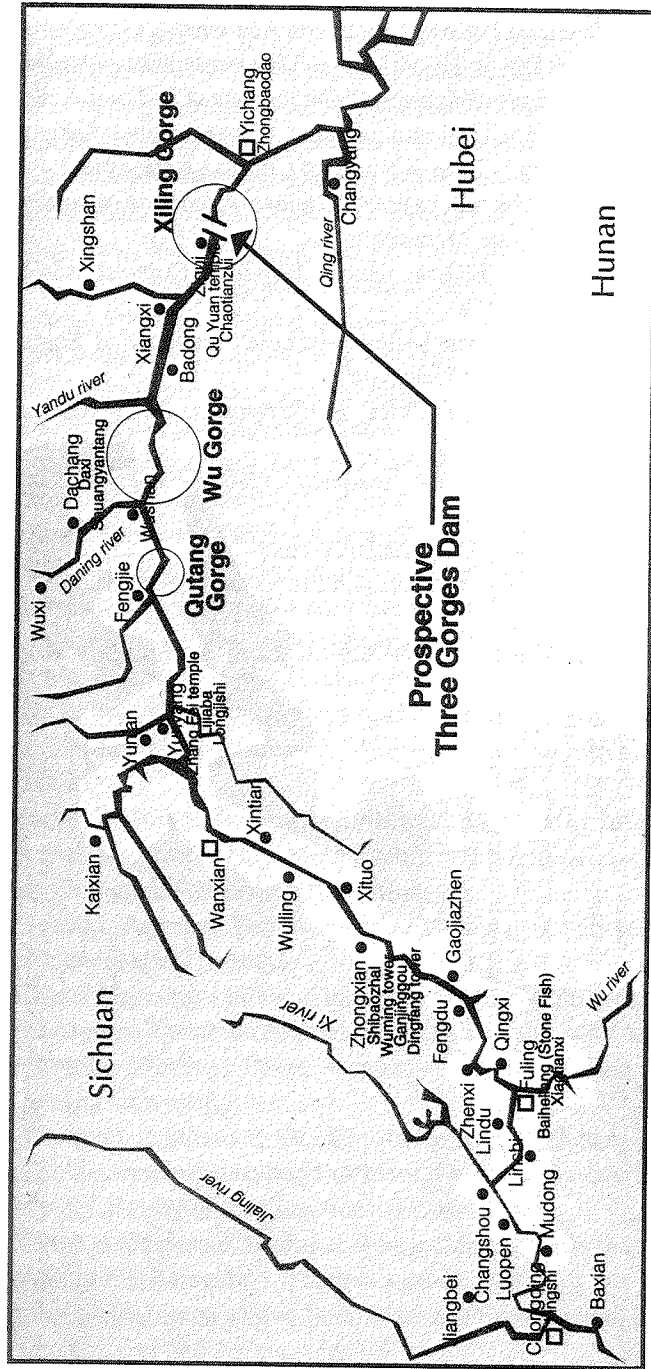
Wang Dingguo, Deputy Director, China Cultural Antiquities Association

Xie Chensheng, China Cultural Antiquities Association

Lin Yaohua, Professor, Central University of Nationalities

Bing Xin, Writer
 Ma Xueliang, Professor, Central University of Nationalities
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 Song Zhuohua, Professor, Central University of Nationalities
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 Fu Lianxing, Senior Engineer, Palace Museum
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 Yan Wenming, Professor, Beijing University
 Li Boqian, Professor, Beijing University
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 Wu Rongzeng, Professor, Beijing University
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 Wen Jizi, Professor, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Graduate School
 Zhu Zixuan, Professor, Qinghua University
 Bao Shixing, Secretary-in-Chief and Professor, China Urban Sciences Association
 Du Baicao, Professor, China Architectural Technology Research Institute



Appendix G. Major Cities and Sites to Be Affected by the Three Gorges Dam and Reservoir
 (Adapted by Chris Ingersoll from *Zhongguo Changjiang Sanxia*, Hong Kong, 1993, pp. 26–27)

Biographic Glossary

Dai Qing: Born in 1941, Dai Qing was trained as a missile engineer at the Harbin Military Engineering Institute and is the adopted daughter of Ye Jianying, one of China’s most senior military leaders. In the 1960s, Dai Qing became a Red Guard activist during the Cultural Revolution and underwent secret service training in the military. In the early 1980s, she became a journalist at *Guangming ribao* (Enlightenment Daily) where she began doing investigative reports on intellectual persecution throughout Chinese Communist Party (CCP) history. She reported on the cases of Wang Shiwei, Liang Shuming, and Chu Anping, all prominent intellectuals who were purged by Party leaders in the 1940s and the 1950s. Dai Qing is a strong advocate of press freedom and environmental protection, and she has collected documents from many scientists and economists opposed to the Three Gorges dam project. In 1989, Dai was imprisoned after the June fourth crackdown in Tiananmen Square. At the same time, her book on the Three Gorges dam, *Changjiang! Changjiang!* (Yangtze! Yangtze!), was banned for allegedly contributing to the “turmoil.” Later released, Dai was allowed to travel abroad and has since been a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University and a fellow at the Freedom Forum, School of Journalism, Columbia University.

Deng Xiaoping: Born in 1904 in Sichuan Province, Deng Xiaoping was the eldest son of a landowner. In 1920, he traveled to France as a work-study student where he joined the European branch of the Chinese Communist Party. On returning to China in 1927, he assumed his first position as an instructor at the Xi’an Military and Political Academy. In 1929, he helped organize communist military forces in the southwestern province of Guangxi and became a political commissar. During the 1945–49 Civil War with the Nationalists, Deng was a member of the Second Field Army in the Crossing the Yangtze River and Huaihai battles. In 1952, he was appointed a vice premier and in 1956 became a member of the CCP Politburo Standing Committee and head of the Party Secretariat. He was condemned in the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) for having previously criticized the personality cult of Mao Zedong and for his “liberal” policies on agriculture and industry. He