
The Peace Hotel, for those who haven't been there, is a tourist attraction in its own right, a historic landmark (formerly the Cathay) in the center of the Bund, Shanghai's historic district. The hotel's Dragon and Phoenix restaurant overlooks the river and Pudong from eight stories above the Bund – very nice.

We spent the next couple of days shopping and sightseeing in Shanghai. We went to the Yu Gardens to see the famous fish pond, but it was being renovated: All but a foot or so of water had been pumped out, and men in waders and blue coveralls were sloshing about trying to catch the valuable goldfish with nets. An amazing amount of junk, including a sunken boat, was revealed. The walkways were crowded with tourists both foreign and domestic, locals and expatriates, all united by the timeless fascination of watching men catch fish. The kids could have stayed for hours, but I wanted to get something to eat and buy a bootleg copy of *Return of the King*. I managed to do both of these, but, to my great disappointment, the English subtitles on the DVD were revoltingly accurate.

On Tuesday afternoon I left the girls with their grandmother and went to Fudan University to give a talk on electronic file-sharing and copyright in the post-Napster world. The students and faculty at Fudan were amazing. The audience was quite small: Fourteen assorted professors, graduate students, and visiting scholars. All spoke English astonishingly well – despite one misunderstanding when the department chair introduced me as “Professor Thomas Jefferson from the Aaron Schwabach School of Law.” As soon as I made it back to the Peace Hotel we rushed off to the auditorium next to the Portman Ritz-Carlton to see the acrobats, who were, of course, superhumanly skilled and also funny.

Update:

In Shanghai we visited Yuyuan, which had been under renovation the previous year – the pond was being drained. Now the renovations are complete, and it's quite beautiful, although it's also now completed the transition from “historic old quarter of the city” to “giant shopping mall,” or at least “giant retail theme park,” complete with Haagen-Dazs, like a Shanghainese Coconut Grove. The next afternoon it was off to the airport by maglev – an eight-minute ride at over 250 miles per hour – and then, thanks to the magic of the International Date Line, back in San Diego an hour or two before we'd left Shanghai.

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