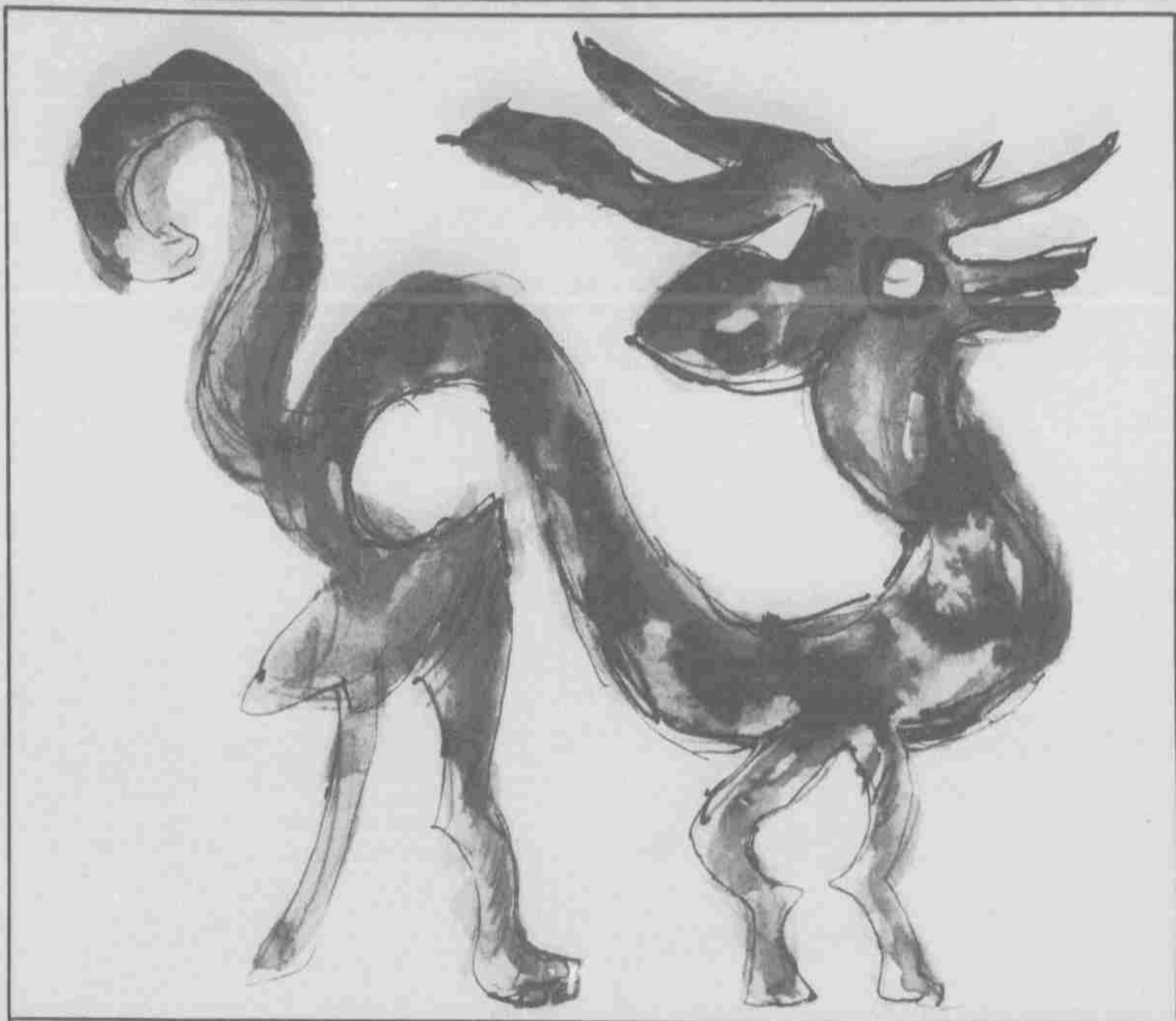


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Phil Tsai/Daily Nebraskan

chinese new year

Analysis by Phillip Tsai
Staff Reporter

Just when you're tired of all the holiday shopping and are glad it's all over, on the other side of the earth, a nation with an ancient history is about ready to celebrate an ancient holiday. Beginning Feb. 9 1986, the Chinese will celebrate their annual Spring Festival, commonly known as the Chinese New Year.

Despite much religious activity in China, the Chinese are primarily "secularist" because their major religions — Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, which have more to do with Chinese philosophy than religion,

which deal fundamentally with how to live a happy and meaningful life.

Unlike Christmas, the date of the Chinese New Year does not regularly fall on the same day of the year because it is measured on the Chinese calendar, commonly known as the Moon calendar.

There is no one particular way of celebration. The best way to describe the way the Chinese celebrate their New Year is to say they do it like Americans celebrate Thanksgiving or the Fourth of July — a lot of food (and you eat more than you should), calling or visiting parents or good friends and exchanging good wishes.

When I was growing up in Shanghai as a child, the things I remember liking most about the New Year were the fireworks and playing in the snow (yes, we have snow too and it usually falls during the New Year time). When waking on New Year's morning, the first thing I did was dress in new clothes and go down to the garden to light fireworks.

Like all major holidays, the Chinese New Year has been celebrated by many different people world-wide. In New York, Hong King and San Francisco (where there is a large Chinese populations), the Chinese New Year is a major annual holiday.

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