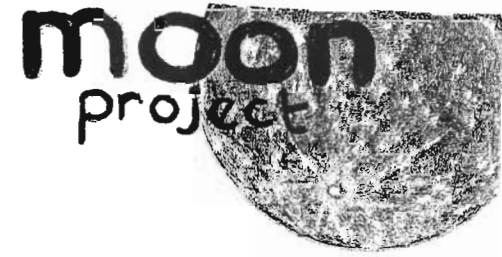


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SKY WATCH

A man on the moon

A favorite story about the moon comes from ancient China, and tells of a man named Wan Ho, who wanted badly to go to the moon. This was quite impossible in ancient China, but Wan Ho wasn't about to let a little thing like technology stand in his way.

One night, while the moon shone brightly

overhead, Wan Ho had some assistants strap him into a chair, and pile explosives beneath him. On his command, his assistants lit the fuses, and ran for their lives.

It wasn't long before a tremendous roar ripped through the air, and a huge flash lit the landscape. When the smoke cleared, the assistants peeked out from their hiding places.

Wan Ho was gone! Not only that, but he was never seen nor heard from again.

Ancient Chinese legend tells that Wan Ho did, indeed, make it to the moon that night, and that we can still see him there whenever the moon is visible — sitting in the same chair and calmly reading a book.

This week, when you see the first quarter moon shining brightly in the southern sky at dusk, look carefully at its illuminated half.

The dark features there are known

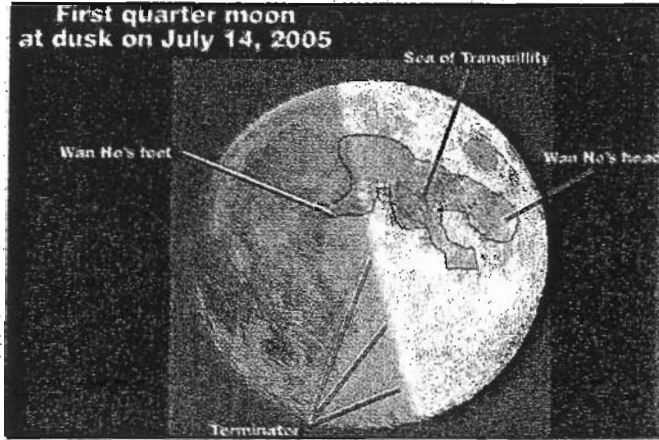


ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL NASRI / COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

to modern scientists as "mare" or "seas" — vast plains of solidified lava.

But they also trace the outline of this intrepid Chinese explorer.

Now, while the story is purely legend, it was in the abdomen of Wan Ho that the first astronauts from planet Earth actually set down onto the lunar surface 36 years ago. That region is known today as the Sea of Tranquility.

As the moon drifts through the sky from night to night, the line between light and dark — the "terminator" — will change as the angle of sunlight on the lunar surface changes.

But Wan Ho will always be there, a constant reminder that people even thousands of years ago had dreams of traveling beyond — to the moon, the planets and the stars.

— DENNIS MAMMANA

How did Wan Ho plan to get to the moon?

When we see Wan Ho on the moon, what do we look for?

What part of Wan Ho's image did Apollo 11 land on in 1969?