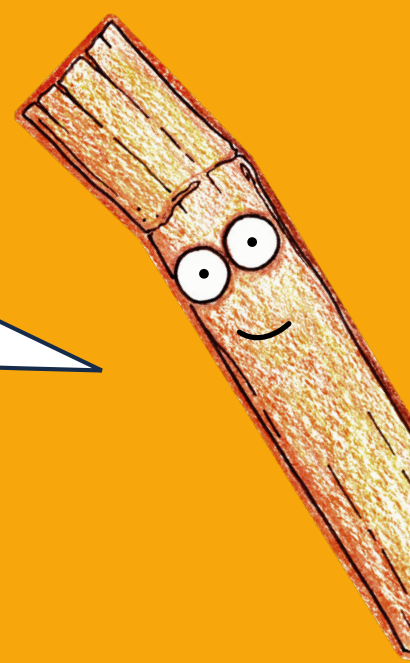


# Dragon and Phoenix

Centuries of Exchange between  
Chinese and Islamic Worlds

Young Visitors' Guide



اللو فر أبو ظبي  
LOUVRE ABU DHABI



Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Limoges, musée national Adrien Dubouché), Mathieu Rabeau



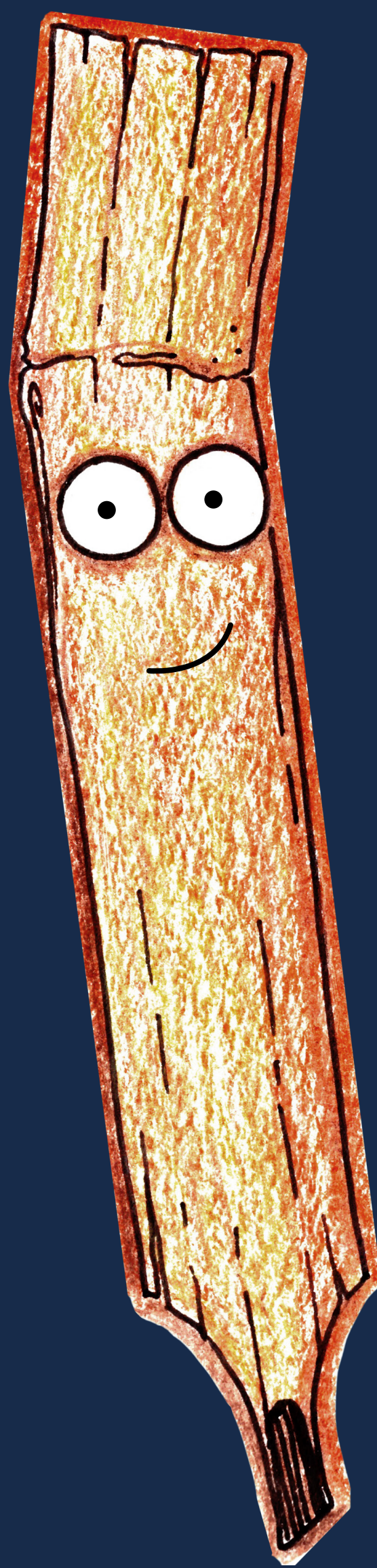


Hi there, it's Qalam. Thanks for joining me on a new journey.

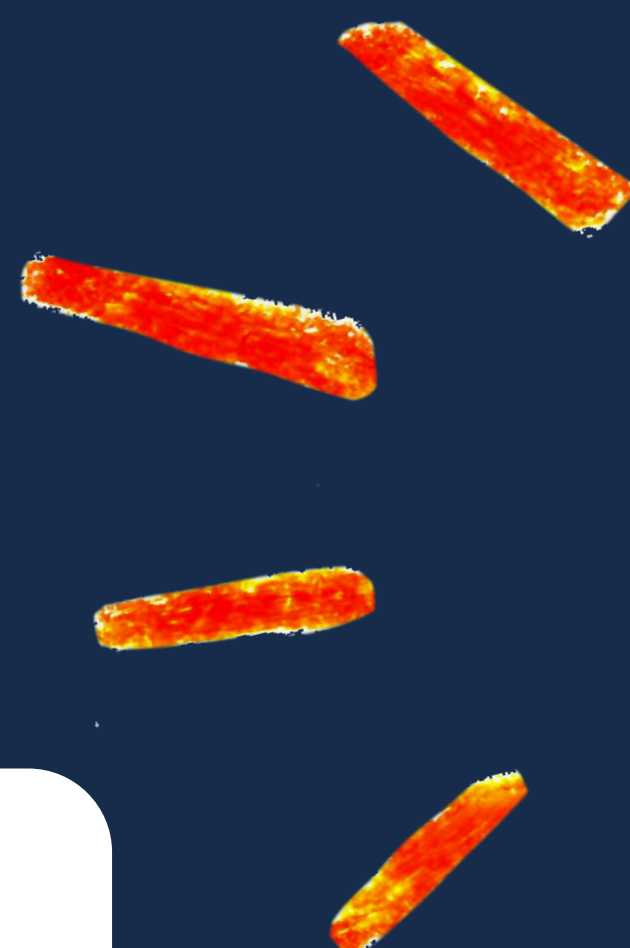
I can't wait to introduce you to my friends as we travel side by side through different trade routes, by land and sea, across the Chinese and Islamic worlds.

Help me learn about the cultural, material and ideas exchanges that took place between the two worlds.

Come along my friend and let's begin our journey!



I hear a loud grunt  
down the road ahead.  
**It's Camel!**





# SECTION 0

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## Introduction

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier



**Funerary figure (*mingqi*):  
caravanner on a camel**  
Northern China – 7th century,  
Tang dynasty (618–907)  
Terracotta covered with slip  
and polychrome  
Paris, Musée National des Arts  
Asiatiques – Guimet, MA 6721



Hello Qalam, I have been waiting for your arrival. I know it was a difficult road to travel on foot. I can help you with your travels ahead.

I was used as a means of transportation in Central Asia to help nomadic merchants with carrying precious cargos such as silk, spices, and fur for trade with China.

Although I was made in China, there are certain features of me that show I originate from Central Asia.

**Look closer and try to identify them.**

Answer:  
a) The caravanner's bun hairstyle and costume indicates Central Asian origin.  
b) The thick winter coat is a trait of a Bactrian camel from Central Asia.



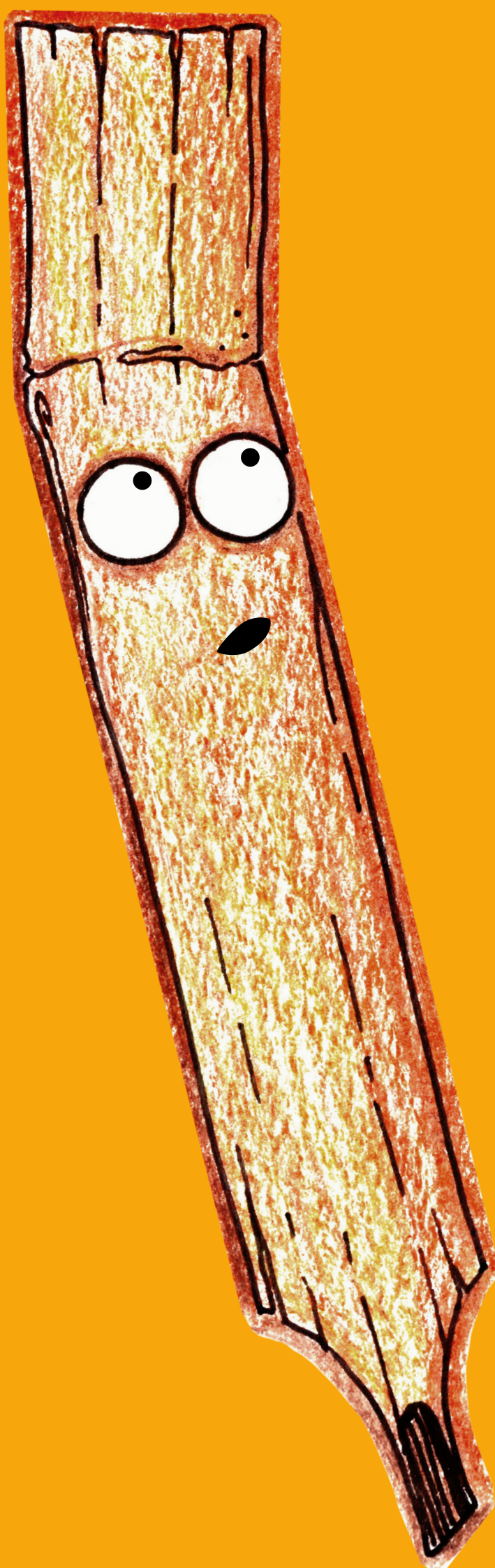
**Let's continue our journey**





I see something up in the sky, it looks like a majestic bird with an eagle beak, a feathered tail and is red like fire.

**It's Phoenix!**





# SECTION 1

## Travelling West

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier



### **Phoenix-head pitcher with hunting scenes**

China, second half of the 8th century, Tang dynasty (618–907)  
Moulded terracotta, incision and glaze, three-colour decoration (*sancai*), D. 17 cm, H. 33 cm  
Paris, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques–Guimet, MA 6587





Hi Qalam, I was on my way to China with merchants to support them travelling through the Arabian Deserts, along the Silk Road.

Because of my travels I have become famous in both worlds; where I am written about within Arabic and Chinese legends.

The tales talk about how I rise from the ashes of a great fire every 500 years symbolising a good omen. I was also used as a symbol to represent compassion and royalty.

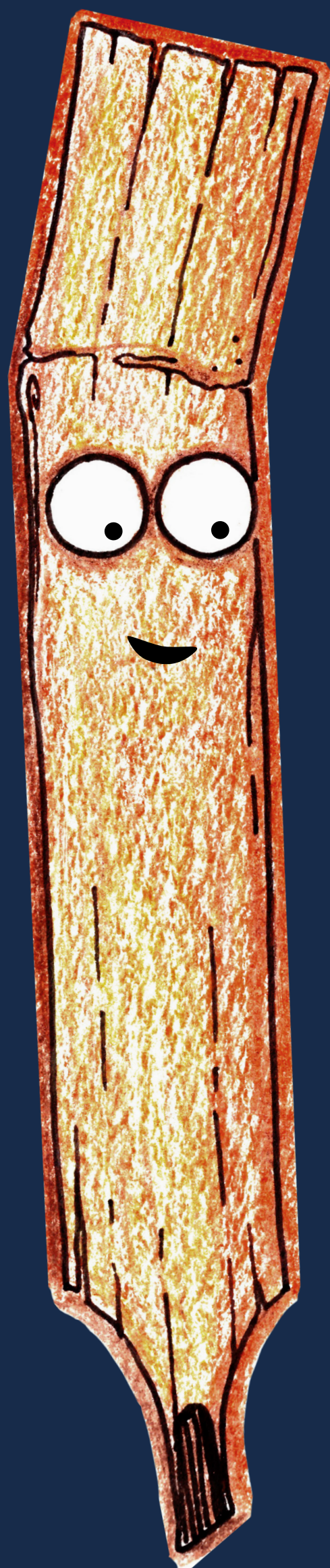
**What mythical animal would you choose to represent your beliefs and values? Why?**

**On to the next part of our journey!**



Let's get on the dhow  
boat and meet my  
friend under the sea.

**It's Goldfish!**





## SECTION 3

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# East – West: Artistic Interactions under the Mongol Dynasties

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Thierry Ollivier



### Dish with ring of fish

China, Zhejiang Province, Longquan  
Late 13th century–early 14th century,  
Yuan dynasty (1279–1368)  
Moulded stoneware, celadon glaze,  
traces of gold paint  
Paris, Musée National des Arts  
Asiatiques–Guimet, G 4585



Hey Qalam, my school and I are about to head back home to Southeast China.

In China, a school of fish is a unique motif representing wealth inspired by the Chinese word for goldfish *jīn yú*, homophones for gold and abundance.

Our friends liked our symbolic design and decided to imitate it within their dishes to represent luck and prosperity. They added an inscription that describes well wishes of fame, power, success and eternal life to the owner.

**Try finding a dish next to us of a similar motif to help you complete the plate set as a gift for someone special.**

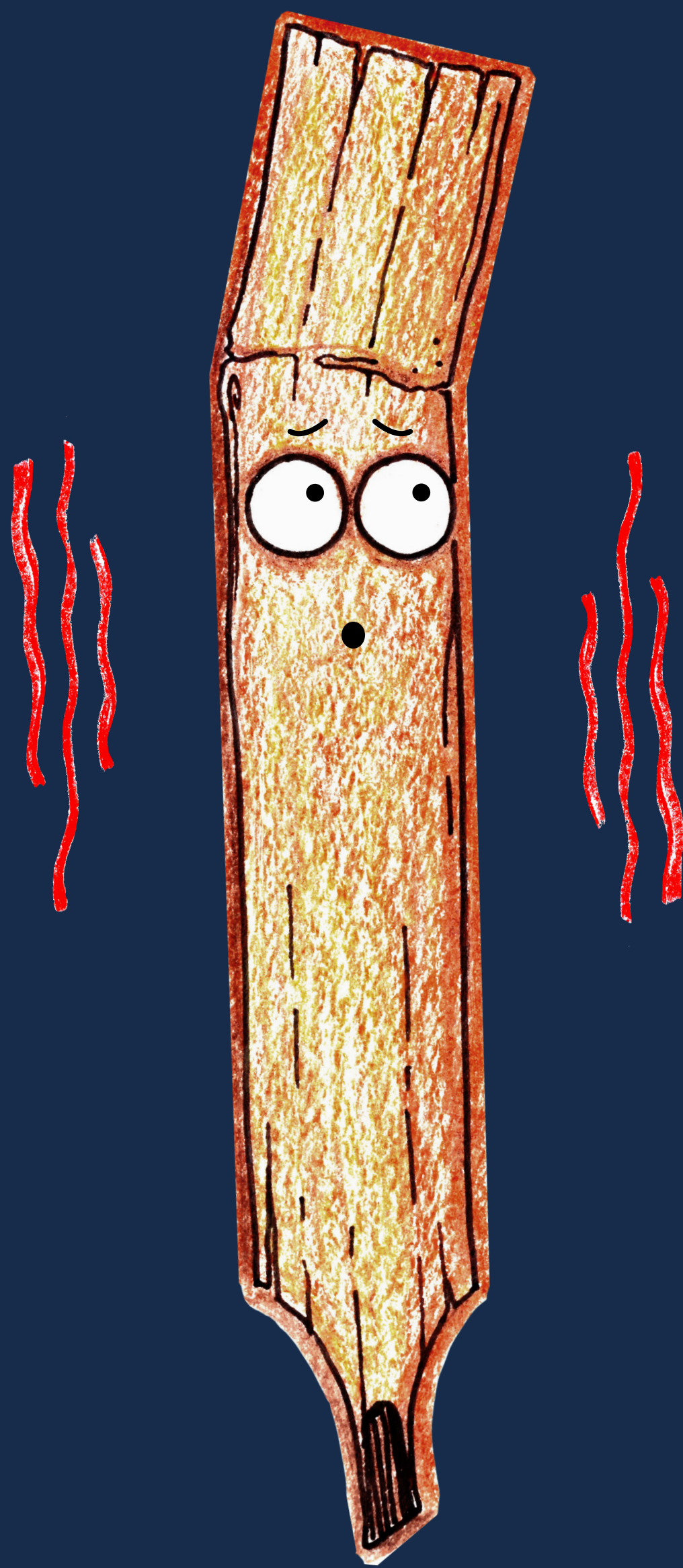


**Let's sail along to the final stop of our journey!**



Phew, it's hot, I wonder  
who it might be.

**It's Dragon!**





## SECTION 4

# The Gallery of Harmonious Exchanges

Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris), Jean-Gilles Berizzi



### Cushion cover with dragon pattern

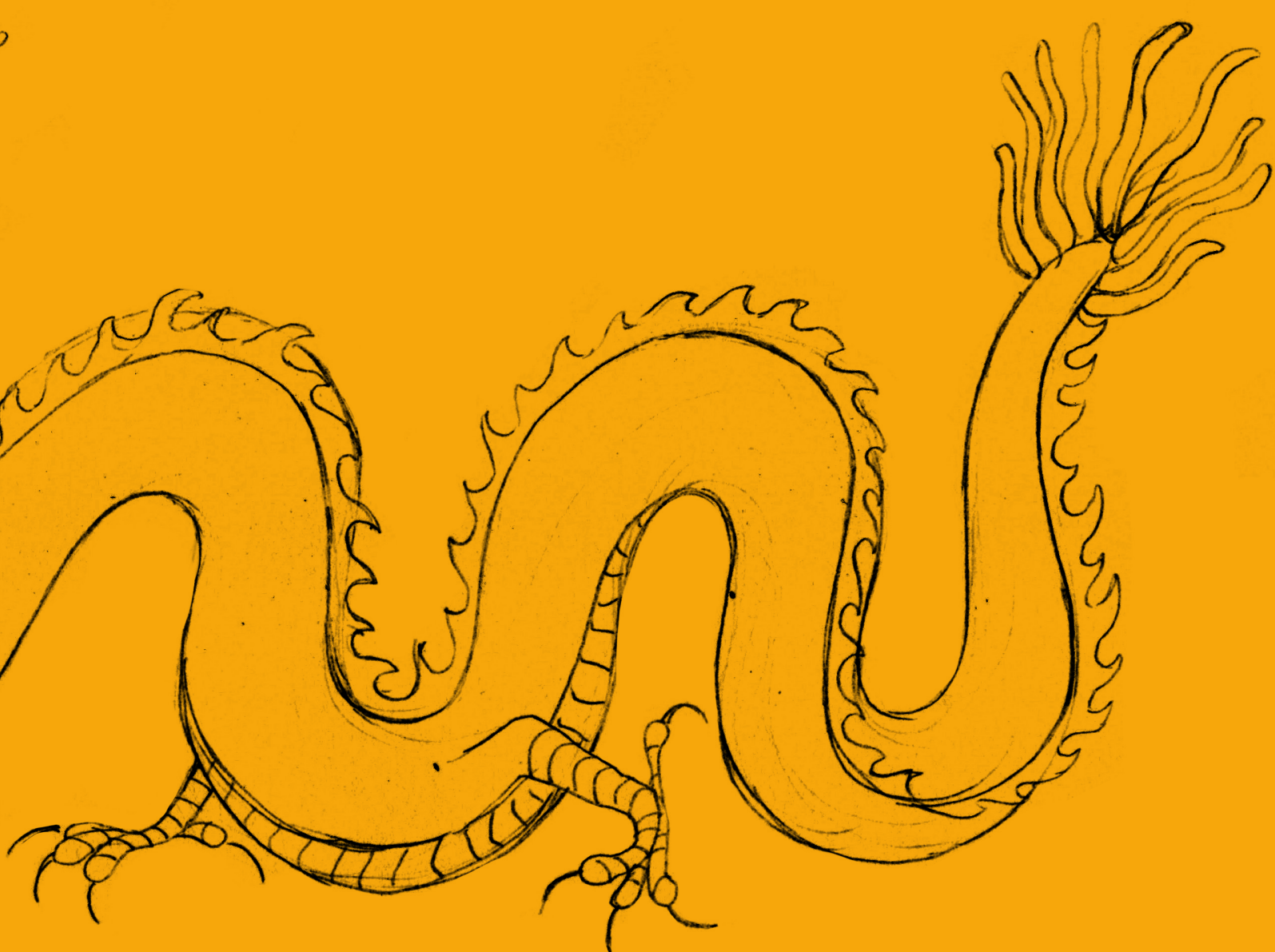
China, 18th century, Qing dynasty (1644–1912)  
Brocade satin silk with gold thread, H. 110 cm, W. 113 cm  
Paris, Musée National des Arts Asiatiques – Guimet, MA 5803



Roar! You're finally here!  
Welcome to China. I have been  
guarding these lands for centuries  
and providing good fortune to its  
people with bountiful amounts  
of rain and light.

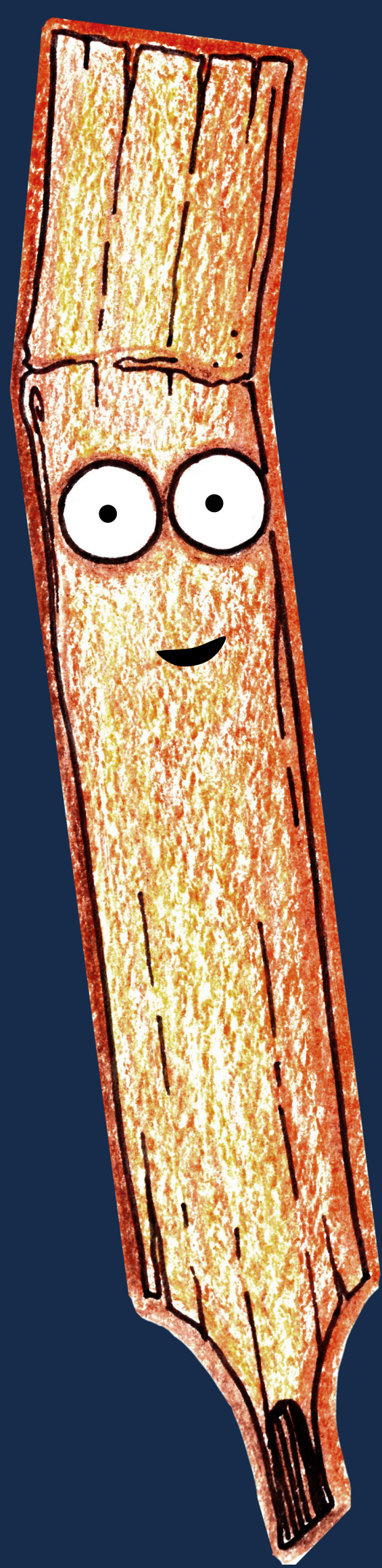
I have also been used to represent  
emperors from the Chinese  
dynasties for thousands of years.  
I am a symbol of power, order and  
luck. I have traveled beyond and  
explored the Islamic world where  
you can find me on luxury goods.  
I can be portrayed as a powerful  
creature, with reptile-like scales,  
giant claws and sometimes winged.  
Around me are several dragons that  
are similar yet different in design.

**Try and find an image of  
a dragon that you like and  
share why with a loved one.**






Thank you for  
accompanying me.  
It's fascinating how  
much we can learn  
from others through  
our travels.





**Please share a memorable journey where you learned and appreciated something new about the country's culture, food or values.**

**Don't forget to share your name and age.**

A large white rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the prompts above.