

世界屋脊探秘

EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF
THE "ROOF OF THE WORLD"

中国旅游出版社

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新疆维吾尔自治区、西藏自治区、云南省、
四川省、甘肃省、青海省在中国的位置
The Position of Xinjiang, Tibet,
Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai in China



目录

Contents

前言	4
第一章 圣地拉萨	16
第二章 后藏揽胜	38
第三章 萨迦寺	
——中国西藏的文化艺术宝库	50
第四章 地球第三极	58
第五章 西行阿里——踏上世界屋脊的屋脊	70
第六章 帕米尔古道	84
第七章 雅鲁藏布大峡谷	94
第八章 羌塘风光	104
第九章 青海湖牧歌	114
第十章 江河之源	122
第十一章 唐蕃古道怀古	130
第十二章 天下黄河第一湾	142
第十三章 茶马古道寻踪	152
第十四章 迷人的香格里拉	168

Preface	4
Chapter I. Lhasa the Holy Land	16
Chapter II. Splendors of Rear Tibet	38
Chapter III. The Sagya Monastery	
—— A Cultural and Art Treasurehouse of China's Tibet	50
Chapter IV. The Third Pole of the Earth	58
Chapter V. Ngari — the Roof of the "Roof of the World"	70
Chapter VI. Ancient Pamir Trail	84
Chapter VII. The Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon	94
Chapter VIII. Qiangtang Scenery	104
Chapter IX. Pastoral Song over the Qinghai Lake	114
Chapter X. The Source of Great Rivers	122
Chapter XI. Recalling Antiquity on the Ancient Tang-Tubo Road	130
Chapter XII. The First Bend of the Yellow River	142
Chapter XIII. Trace the Ancient Tea-Horse Trails	152
Chapter XIV. The Fascinating Shangri-la	168

前言

谷维恒

青藏高原，中国四大高原之一，旧称青康藏高原，平均海拔 4000 ~ 4500 米，是世界上最高、最大、也是最年轻的高原。青藏高原北界昆仑山、阿尔金山、祁连山，南到喜马拉雅山，东南至横断山脉。包括西藏自治区、青海省、四川省西部、甘肃省西南部 and 新疆南部山地。东西长约 2700 千米；南北宽约 1400 千米，总面积约为 250 万平方千米，约占中国陆地总面积的 1/4。

人们把青藏高原称为“世界屋脊”，主要是因为它的海拔高度处在中国最高一级的地势台阶，有许多超过 6000 ~ 8000 米的山峰，与周围地区的相对高差往往达到数千米。高原北缘的昆仑山——阿尔金山——祁连山，从 4000 米的落差，急降到海拔约 1000 米的塔里木盆地和河西走廊；高原东缘的岷山——邛崃山——大雪山与海拔 300 ~ 400 米的四川盆地，高差达 3000 米以上；高原南缘的喜马拉雅山，平均海拔 6000 米以上。从海拔仅为 50 米左右的印度恒河平原北望高原，更显得平地拔起，气势磅礴。

早在 2.8 亿年前的早二叠纪，现在的青藏高原除北部的阿尔金山脉外，大部分地区还是辽阔的古地中海的一部分。后来，由于地球内部的巨大作用力，印度板块不断向北漂移，插入青藏高原底部，使北部的欧亚大陆不断抬升。大约在 3000 万年前，喜马拉雅山开始崛起。随着古地

中海的逐渐消失，青藏高原地区全部成为陆地。从距今 200 ~ 300 万年的上新世末到第四纪初，强烈抬升的青藏高原经过三个上升阶段，达到了今天的高度。也就是说，200 多万年来，它增高了 3000 ~ 4000 米。迄今为止，这种抬升仍未停止，大约每年要抬升 5 ~ 10 毫米。

青藏高原上分布着许多东西走向的高大山脉。自南向北，依次排列的山脉主要有喜马拉雅山脉、冈底斯——念青唐古拉山脉、喀喇昆仑——唐古拉山脉、昆仑山脉和阿尔金——祁连山脉；在高原的东南部，还有南北走向的横断山脉。

喜马拉雅山位于青藏高原南侧，是一条近似东西向的弧形山系，也是世界上最新褶皱形成的山脉。其主要部分在我国与印度、尼泊尔的交界线上。它由许多平行的山脉组成，从南至北分为锡伐利克山、小喜马拉雅山、大喜马拉雅山、柴斯克山和拉达克山四带。“喜马拉雅”一词来自梵文，原意为雪的家乡。喜马拉雅山脉全长 2400 千米，南北宽约 200 ~ 350 千米，山势雄伟高峻，平均海拔 6000 米以上，高峰林立，其中超过 7000 米的山峰有 50 多座，8000 米以上的山峰有 11 座。习惯上，大喜马拉雅山被分为三段：普兰以西至印度南迦帕尔巴特峰为西喜马拉雅；普兰（纳木那尼峰）至亚东的帕里（卓木拉日峰）为中喜马拉雅；亚东的帕里至雅鲁藏布江大

拐弯（南迦巴瓦峰）为东喜马拉雅。中喜马拉雅又被称为高喜马拉雅，世界第一高峰珠穆朗玛峰（海拔 8848.13 米）就雄踞中喜马拉雅的中国和尼泊尔边界上。珠穆朗玛峰周围 5000 多平方千米内，有 8000 米以上高峰 6 座；7000 米以上高峰 38 座。这种高峰汇集的现象举世无双，故珠穆朗玛峰地区又被称为地球第三极。喜马拉雅山自然风光壮丽，雪山之上有许多规模巨大的现代冰川、冰塔林，以及冰斗、角峰等高山自然景观，而在南坡山腰，则是林海苍郁、生机盎然。

冈底斯山——念青唐古拉山，横亘于西藏自治区中部，西起阿里地区狮泉河，东到昌都地区嘉黎，东南延伸与横断山脉的伯舒拉岭相接。这是一条基本上连续延伸的巨大山系，东西长约 1400 千米，其中冈底斯山 1040 千米，念青唐古拉山 360 千米。冈底斯山主峰为冈仁波齐峰，海拔 6656 米，藏语意为“雪的宝贝”，被四种宗教尊为神山。念青唐古拉山主峰为念青唐古拉峰，海拔 7111 米。

喀喇昆仑山雄踞青藏高原西北侧，是仅次于喜马拉雅山，位居世界第二位的最高山脉，平均海拔 6000 米，主峰乔戈里峰，海拔 8611 米，是世界第二高峰。喀喇昆仑山连结着喜马拉雅山、唐古拉山和帕米尔高原，喀喇昆仑山口为新疆通往克什米尔的古老交通孔道。

唐古拉山，藏语叫“当拉”，横卧在青藏高原中部，西接喀喇昆仑山，东南延伸连接横断山脉的怒山，是西藏自治区与青海省的界山。它北起小唐古拉山，南至西藏安多一线，南北宽约160千米，是一组具有宽广山幅的山脉。唐古拉山的主体部分海拔都在6000米以上，但相对高度却多在500米左右。各拉丹冬峰，海拔6621米，是唐古拉山最高峰，也是我国第一大河长江的发源地。

昆仑山，位于青藏高原北部，是西藏自治区与新疆维吾尔自治区的界山，它西起帕米尔高原，东至四川盆地西北部，东西长达2500千米，南北宽约150千米，平均海拔5000~6000米，是我国大陆中部地形的骨架。实际上，昆仑山是我国西部的一个由许多条山脉组成的巨大山系。木孜塔格峰，海拔6973米，是昆仑山东部最高峰。

横断山脉是我国西藏自治区东部及四川省西部、云南省西北部南北走向山脉的总称。横断山脉，位于青藏高原的东部，高山与深谷相间，南北并行。自西向东，主要的山脉谷地为：伯舒拉岭——高黎贡山、怒江谷地，他念他翁山——怒山、澜沧江谷地，宁静山——云岭、金沙江谷地，雀儿山——沙鲁里山、雅砻江谷地，大雪山——折多山——锦屏山、大渡河谷地，邛崃山——大凉山，构成了两山夹一川，两川夹一山的险峻地形。横断山脉的高度自北向南逐渐降低，北部山岭海拔5000米左右，南部山岭则降至4000米左右。

青藏高原上有着众多雄伟险峻的峡谷，其中

最著名的要数雅鲁藏布大峡谷和三江（怒江、澜沧江、金沙江）峡谷了。雅鲁藏布江河面超过3000米的河段约占总长的3/4，是世界上海拔最高的大河。雅鲁藏布大峡谷深达5382米，是世界上最深的峡谷。

羌塘高原，位于昆仑山和冈底斯——念青唐古拉山之间，是中国内陆湖泊分布最集中的区域，有“千湖羌塘”之称。其东北端昆仑山与唐古拉山之间的可可西里山地区，是著名的无人区，那里是野牦牛、藏羚羊、藏野驴等野生动物的乐园。

青海南部是青藏高原核心的一部分，素有“江河源”之称，不仅长江、黄河发源于此，东南亚大河萨尔温江和湄公河的上源——怒江和澜沧江，也由此发源。

宽广的盆地，是青藏高原宏观地貌格局的重要组成部分，其中以柴达木盆地和青海湖盆地最为著名。柴达木盆地以盐湖众多而闻名，各种盐类矿物富集，其中氯化钾、氯化钠、氯化镁、锂、碘、溴，以及石棉的储量均居全国首位。青海湖，湖面海拔3196米，面积4200平方千米，是中国最大的内陆咸水湖。

羌塘高原的纳木错，海拔4718米，面积1920平方千米，是世界上海拔最高的大湖。纳木错、羊卓雍错和玛旁雍错是西藏的三大圣湖。

青藏高原有着丰富的地热资源，藏滇高温地热带，是全球性地中海——喜马拉雅地热带的重要组成部分，也是中国地热资源最丰富的地区。拉萨西北部的羊八井盆地，海拔4200米左右，

盆地下面蕴藏着200~300℃的高温热水，是一个巨大的热源。东北部的热水湖，面积7350平方米，水深16米，湖面水温在45~59℃之间。西藏昂仁县塔各加，海拔约5000米，是著名的间歇泉区，四个间歇喷泉，喷出的水气柱高达20米左右，十分壮观。

青藏高原有着久远的人类文化历史，考古工作者曾在青海西部柴达木盆地的小柴旦湖湖滨沙砾层中，在海拔4000米以上沱沱河沿和可可西里地区采集到距今2.3万年前旧石器时代，属于中国远古文化“新人阶段”、被称为“小柴旦人”的打制石器。在黑马河发现距今1.7万年的古人类遗址，我国科学工作者自1956年开始发现西藏古人类文化到1980年考古方面的进展，证明青藏高原早在10000年以前就有人类活动，而且这些古文化遗址也在10000年以前就同华北、华南等地的古文化有着密切的渊源关系。据推算，林芝人的活动时期为8000年前至5000年前，卡若文化遗址为4700年前左右，他们是现代藏族的祖先。

先秦时代，青海高原居住着羌戎各部。羌和戎是当时对西部居民的泛称，戎居东而羌偏西。战国以来主要有无弋爰剑为首的西羌各部以河湟一带为中心活动。汉元狩二年（公元前121年）汉武帝进兵河湟，设立临羌县和破羌县，至西汉末年，王莽在今海晏县设西海郡，置太守，下设五县，青海东部地区正式纳入中原封建王朝郡县制中。古代，笮，又作“笮都夷”、“旄牛夷”，主要分布于今四川汉源一带及甘孜、石棉等地。

竿人是川西北最古老的居民之一。南北走向的横断山脉峡谷，古代曾是西北民族向南迁徙的通道。

公元4世纪初，祖居辽东的鲜卑族吐谷浑部从辽东迁入青海高原，建立了吐谷浑国。公元六七世纪，在今四川阿坝茂汶以西、甘孜州的巴塘、理塘，以及西藏昌都地区，还曾建立过以女性为中心和女性崇拜的社会制度的东女国。远在隋代之前，在青藏高原西部及西北部，羌系民族就建立了苏毗王国，其地域曾东扩到拉萨河流域和昌都的西北部一带。苏毗世代以女为王，由女王、小女王共同执政，保存着大量的母系氏族制残余，是一个以女权为核心的母权国家。

2000多年前，西藏南部雅鲁藏布江流域的雅隆部落崛起。公元7世纪前期，雅隆部落首领松赞干布由雅隆河谷迁居逻些（今拉萨），建立吐蕃王朝，陆续兼并了苏毗国、东女国、吐谷浑等一些其他部落。“吐蕃”一词，最早见于《新唐书·吐蕃传》，最初系指现在的西藏而言，后因“吐蕃”奴隶制王朝势力强大，继兼并邻近部落之后，又占领了青海、西康等地区，因而就把当时所有在“吐蕃”统治下的整个青藏高原地区，都叫做“吐蕃”。元代，西藏地方正式成为中国的一个行政区域，这使当时西藏已有百年的混乱局面得以结束，统一于元朝中央的管辖之下。而对整个藏族地区，仍沿用唐代的旧称，叫做“吐蕃”。青海、甘南、川西北在藏语中称为“安多”，现在一般称为“安多藏区”；甘孜地区、云南迪庆以及昌都地区在藏语中称为“康”，现在一般

称为“康区”，把当地藏族人民称为“康巴”。

今天的青藏高原地跨西藏自治区、青海省、新疆维吾尔自治区南部和西南部、四川省西部和西北部、甘肃省南部、云南省西北部。这里生活着藏族、汉族、土族、蒙古族、回族、纳西族、傈僳族、维吾尔族、塔吉克族、彝族、白族、羌族、怒族、裕固族、独龙族、门巴族、珞巴族，以及夏尔巴人、僜人等30余个民族。青藏高原上的宗教信仰主要有藏传佛教、本教、伊斯兰教和天主教。

青藏高原幅员辽阔、风光壮丽，景观多样，是地球上最有诱惑力的旅游目的地。青藏高原上极富特色的民族风情、服装服饰、生活习俗和宗教信仰使来自世界各地的旅游者感到新奇、惊喜、富有神秘感。以雄伟的珠穆朗玛峰、乔戈里峰、南迦巴瓦峰、卡瓦格博峰、贡嘎山、四姑娘山、冈仁波齐峰和仙乃日峰为代表的雪山，不但使人领悟到冰峰雪山的高大、雄伟、险峻与神奇，还显出了它们与人类心灵相互沟通的灵性一面。人们敬畏它，崇拜它，热爱它，也期盼它赐福与人类。

金碧辉煌的布达拉宫，是青藏高原上人类智慧的结晶。它与大昭寺、扎什伦布寺、萨迦寺、雍布拉克、古格王国遗址、桑耶寺、白居寺、色拉寺、哲蚌寺、塔尔寺、拉卜楞寺、强巴林寺、德格印经院、松赞林寺等向旅游者讲述着青藏高原上人们走过的历史和辉煌的文化艺术成就。漫步在高大的殿堂或古老建筑的遗址中，旅游者

们会被那色彩艳丽、内容丰富、形象鲜明、充满想像力的壁画所吸引，精美的唐卡、庄严的塑像、浩瀚的经卷和众多的历史文物，常使人们驻足不前，流连忘返。

节日的青藏高原是欢乐的海洋，无论是在城镇，还是在乡村；无论是在雪山脚下，还是在寺庙；无论是林中空地，还是湖畔牧场，到处都是沉浸在节日欢乐中的男男女女。高原上的节日众多，既有“元旦”、“五一”、“十一”这样举国欢庆的节日，还有名目繁多的地方性、民族性及宗教性的节日：藏历新年、展佛节、酥油灯会、浪山节、雪顿节、赛马会、恰青艺术节、转山会、花儿会……。高原上的节日色彩也是五彩缤纷，令人目不暇接，回味无穷。在幅员辽阔的高原上，不仅不同民族的男女老少有着不同的服饰，即便是同一民族，不同的地域、不同的部落之间，服饰也有着极大的差异。丰富多彩的高原节日，也是世界各地旅游者们的最乐意参与的活动之一。

青藏高原像磁石一样吸引着世界各地的旅行家、朝圣者和学者。在世界屋脊旅行，在世界屋脊探秘，不仅使人饱览了世界屋脊壮丽的大自然风光，也领略了高原深处的古朴民风、巡访了众多的名胜古迹和宗教圣地。这不是单纯的投身大自然的旅行，它还是一次令人终生难忘的精神之旅。它像一杯香醇的美酒，尽洒在你的心田，令你神往、令你回味。

Preface

By Gu Weiheng

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, called Qinghai-Xikang-Tibet Plateau in the old times, with an average altitude of 4,000-4,500 meters above sea level, is one of four main plateaus in China. It is the highest, largest and youngest plateau in the world. It includes the Kunlun Mountains, the Altun Mountains and the Qilian Mountains in the north, the Himalayan Mountains in the south, and the Hengduan Mountains in the southwest. The plateau covers Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai Province, western Sichuan Province, southwestern Gansu Province and southern Xinjiang. It stretches 2,700 kilometers from east to west and 1,400 kilometers from north to south, with a total area of 2.5 million square kilometers, making up one-fourth of China's land area.

China has a terraced terrain, which descends from the west to the east step by step. The first, or the highest, terrace is the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, called the "roof of the world" with numerous mountains higher than 6,000-8,000 meters. The relative altitude difference of these mountains with the surrounding areas reaches thousands of meters. The Kunlun Mountains, the Altun Mountains and the Qilian Mountains at the northern edge of the plateau descend abruptly from 4,000 meters above sea level to about 1,000 meters above sea level (Tarim Basin and the Hexi Corridor). The Minshan Mountains, the Qionglai Mountains and the Daxue Mountains at the eastern edge of the plateau have a drop of 3,000 meters compared to the Sichuan Basin, which is only 300-400 meters above sea level. The Himalayan Mountains at the southern edge of the plateau is 6,000 meters above

sea level on average, but the adjacent Ganges River Plain in India is only 50 meters above sea level.

In the early Permian Period 280 million years ago, most of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, except for the Altun Mountains, was part of the ancient Mediterranean Sea. Later, due to crustal movements, the Indian Plate drifted northward and inserted into the bottom of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, resulting in the rising of the northern Eurasian Continent. About 30 million years ago, the Himalayan Mountains began to rise. Following gradual disappearance of the ancient Mediterranean Sea, the area became continent. From the late Pliocene Epoch to the early Quaternary Period about 2-3 million years ago, the rising Qinghai-Tibet Plateau underwent three stages to reach today's height. That is to say, in the past 2 million years it has risen 3,000-4,000 meters. Up to now, the area continues to rise about 5 to 10 millimeters annually.

On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau there are many east-west mountains. The main mountains include the Himalayan Mountains, the Gangdise-Nyainqentanglha Mountains, the Karakorum-Tangula Mountains, the Kunlun Mountains, and the Altun-Qilian Mountains. In the southwestern part of the plateau there is the north-south Hengduan Mountains.

The Himalayas is in the southern part of the plateau, an east-west curve mountain range, and the newest folded mountains in the world. The main part is on the Sino-Indian and Sino-Nepalese borders. From south to north, the mountains can be grouped into four parallel, longitudinal mountain belts — Shivalik, Lesser Himalayas, Greater Himalayas, and Chaik-

Ladak — each with its unique features and distinctive geological history. Himalaya means "adobe of snow" in Sanskrit. The Himalayas is 2,400 kilometers long and 200-350 kilometers wide from north to south, with an average altitude of 6,000 meters above sea level. There are more than 50 peaks of over 7,000 meters above sea level and 11 peaks of over 8,000 meters above sea level. From west to east the Greater Himalayas is roughly divided into three sections: The Western Himalayas is from Burang to India's Nanjapalbat in the west, the Central Himalayas is from Burang (Mt. Naimonanyi) to Yadong's Pagri (Mt. Chomolari) in the west, and the Eastern Himalayas is from Yadong's Pagri to the Great Bend of the Yarlong Zangbo River (Mt. Namjagbarwa). The Central Himalayas is also called the Higher Himalayas. Mt. Qomolangma (8848.13 meters), the highest mountain in the world, sits on the Central Himalayas on the Sino-Nepalese border. In an area of 5,000 square kilometers around it are six mountains higher than 8,000 meters and 38 mountains higher than 7,000 meters. This phenomenon is unique in the world, so the Qomolangma area is also called the "Third Pole of the Earth." The Himalayas has magnificent scenery. On snow-capped mountains are many huge modern glaciers and forests of seracs, as well as cirques and tinds. But on the southern slope there are dense forests, a scene overflowing with vigor.

The Gangdise-Nyainqentanglha Mountains, standing in the middle of Tibet Autonomous Region, start at Shiquanhe in Ngari Prefecture in the west, end at Lhari in Qamdo Prefecture in the east, and stretch to

Boshula Range of the Hengduan Mountains in the southwest. This is a basically continuous mountain range, 1,400 kilometers from east to west (including 1,040-km-long Gangdise Mountains and 360-km-long Nyainqentanglha Mountains). The highest peak of the Gangdise Mountains is Kangrinboqe, meaning “baby of snow” in Tibetan, 6,656 meters above sea level. It is regarded as a holy mountain by four religions. Mt. Nyainqentanglha, 7,111 meters above sea level, is the highest peak of the Nyainqentanglha Mountains.

The Karakorum Mountains is in the northwestern part of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the second highest in the world after the Himalayas, with an average altitude of 6,000 meters above sea level. Its highest peak, Qogir, is the second highest peak in the world, at 8,611 meters above sea level. The Karakorum Mountains is linked with the Himalayas, the Tangua Mountains and the Pamir Plateau, and the Karakorum Mountain Pass is an ancient passageway from Xinjiang to Kashmir.

The Tangua Mountains, called “Dang La” in Tibetan, lie in the middle of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It links the Karakorum Mountains in the west and the Nushan Mountain of the Hengduan Mountains in the southeast, and is the boundary mountain between Tibet Autonomous Region and Qinghai Province. Its northern edge is the Lesser Tangua Mountain, and its southern edge is near Amdo of Tibet, about 160 kilometers wide from north to south. The principal part of the Tangua Mountains is above 6,000 meters, but the relative height is around 500 meters. Mt. Gladandong, at 6,621 meters above sea level, is the highest peak of the Tangua Mountains, and also the source of the Changjiang (Yangtze) River, the longest river in the country.

The Kunlun Mountain range, located in northern Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, is the boundary mountain between Tibet Autonomous Region and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Starting at the Pamir Plateau in the west and ending at the northwestern part of the Sichuan Basin, it stretches 2,500 kilometers from west to east, and is 150 kilometers wide from north to south. At an average altitude of 5,000-6,000 meters above sea level, it forms the framework of the central part of the Chinese mainland. In fact, the Kunlun Mountains is a huge mountain system consisting of many mountains. Mt. Muztag, 6,973 meters above sea level, is the highest peak of the eastern Kunlun

Mountains.

The Hengduan Mountains is a collective name of north-south mountains in eastern Tibet, western Sichuan and northwestern Yunnan. The Hengduan Mountains, located in eastern Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, consists of parallel high mountains and deep valleys. From west to east, the main mountains and valleys are as follows: Boshula Range-Gaoligong Mountain, Nujiang River Valley, Taniantaweng Mountain-Nushan Mountain, the Lancang River Valley, the Ningjing Mountain-Yunling Mountain, the Jinsha River Valley, the Que'er Mountain-Shaluli Mountain, the Yalong River Valley, the Daxue Mountain-Zheduo Mountain-Jinping Mountain, the Dadu River Valley, the Qionglai Mountain-Daliang Mountain. The terrain features a mountain flanked by two rivers and a river flanked by two mountains. The Hengduan Mountains descends gradually from north to south. The northern part of the mountains is 5,000 meters above sea level, while the southern part is 4,000 meters above sea level.

Among the numerous valleys on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the most famous are the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon and the gorges of the Three Parallel Rivers (the Nujiang, the Lancang, and the Jinsha). The sections of the Yarlung Zangbo River whose altitude exceeding 3,000 meters make up three-fourths of its total length. It is the world's highest-altitude river. The Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon is 5,328 meters deep, the deepest canyon in the world.

The Qangtang Plateau, located between the Kunlun-Gangdise Mountains and the Nyainqentanglha Mountains, has concentrated the largest number of continental lakes in the country, enjoying the reputation of “1,000-lake Qangtang.” The Hoh Xil Mountains, located between the Kunlun Mountains and the Tangua Mountains at the northeastern edge of the Qangtang Plateau, is a famous no-man's land and a paradise for wildlife such as wild yak, Tibetan antelope (chiru) and Tibetan wild donkey.

Southern Qinghai is the core of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, known as “source of great rivers,” including not only the Yangtze and Yellow rivers, but also the Nujiang and Lancang rivers — the upper courses of the Salween and the Mekong rivers.

Vast basins are an important part of the terrain of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the most famous being Qaidam Basin and the Qinghai Lake Basin. The

Qaidam Basin is well known for its numerous salt lakes, which are rich in various saline minerals. Among them, the reserves of potassium chloride, sodium chloride, magnesium chloride, lithium, iodine, bromine, and asbestos rank first nationwide. The Qinghai Lake, at 3,196 meters above sea level and covering 4,200 square kilometers, is the largest inland saltwater lake in the country.

Nam Co, a lake at 4,718 meters above sea level on the Qangtang Plateau, covers 1,920 square kilometers. It is the highest-altitude lake in the world. Nam Co, Yangzhog Yumco and Mapam Yumco are the three sacred lakes of Tibet.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has rich geothermal resources. The Tibet-Yunnan high-temperature geothermal belt is an important part of the Mediterranean-Himalayan geothermal belt, and also the region with the richest geothermal resources in China. The Yangbajain Basin, located northwest of Lhasa, is at 4,200 meters above sea level. Beneath the basin are hot waters 200-300 degrees Centigrade, a huge source of thermal energy. There is a hot-water lake, covering 7,350 square meters with a water depth of 16 meters in northeastern Yangbajain. The temperature of the water surface keeps between 45 and 59 degrees Centigrade. Dagyai in Ngamring County, 5,000 meters above sea level, has the largest geyser group in China. Four geysers, whose water pillars can reach as high as 20 meters, form a wonderfully spectacular sight.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has a long history of human civilization. Archaeologists found chipped stone tools, made in the Paleolithic Age 23,000 years ago, at gravel strata on the shore of Lesser Qaidam Lake in the Qaidam Basin in western Qinghai, and along the Tuotuo River at 4,000 meters above sea level, and in Hoh Xil. These tools were made by Xiaochaidan Man, known as Neanthropus. Discoveries made by Chinese scientists between 1956 and 1980 on the Palaeoanthropological site along the Heima River, which dates back 17,000 years, indicate that as early as 10,000 years ago human activities occurred on the Tibet Plateau, and these cultural remains have close connections with the ancient culture in North China and South China. According to calculation, the Nyingchi Man lived 8,000 to 5,000 years ago, and the Karub cultural remains date back 4,700 years. They

were the ancestors of today's Tibetan people.

During the pre-Qin years (before 221 B.C., when Qinshihuang, or First Emperor of Qin, united China; usually referring to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period) on the Qinghai Plateau lived the tribes of Qiang and Rong. Qiang lived in western Qinghai and Rong in eastern Qinghai. During the Warring States Period various Qiang tribes, headed by Wuyi Yuanjian, mainly lived in the Hehuang area. In 121 B.C., the second year of Yuanshou Reign of the Han Dynasty, Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty sent an expedition to the Hehuang area, and established Linqiang County and Poqiang County. During the late Western Han Dynasty, Wang Mang (45 B.C. - A.D. 23), the founder of a short-lived Xin Dynasty, established the Xihai Commandery at what is today's Haiyan County, and appointed a governor. Under his jurisdiction were five counties. From then on, eastern Qinghai was officially under the rule of the central government. In ancient time, the Zuo tribes, also called "Zuodu Yi" or "Maoniui Yi," mainly lived in what is today's Hanyuan, Garze and Shimian of Sichuan Province. The Zuo people were one of the earliest inhabitants in northwestern Sichuan. The north-south valleys in the Hengduan Mountains were used by ancient tribes in northwestern China as channels through which to migrate south.

The Tuyuhun, originating from the ancient Xianbei people, moved westward to Qinghai from Liaodong (the region east of the Liaohe River in northeast China) in the early fourth century, and set up their own regime. In the sixth and seventh century, a Dongnū Kingdom, which was a matriarchal state, was established in what is today's Aba Prefecture's Maowen and Garze Prefecture's Batang and Litang in western Sichuan and Qamdo Prefecture in eastern Tibet. Before the Sui Dynasty, in western and northwestern Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the Supi Kingdom was established by the Qiang tribes, and its territory once expanded to the Lhasa River valley and northwestern Qamdo. The Supi Kingdom was ruled by female monarchs from generation to generation, and kept a great deal of matriarchal traditions.

Over 2,000 years ago, the Yarlung Tribe who lived along the Yarlung Zangbo River in southern Tibet rose to prominence. During the early 7th century, Songtsan Gambo, chief of the Yarlung Tribe, moved to

Loso (today's Lhasa), and established the Tubo Kingdom. It annexed the Supi, Dongnū, Tuyuhun and other tribes. The name "Tubo" first appeared in *The New Chronicles of the Tang Dynasty (Xin Tang Shu)*, referring to what is today's Tibet. Later, following the burgeoning of the Tubo Kingdom, after annexing its neighboring tribes, its territory expanded to Qinghai and Xikang. Therefore, the entire Qinghai-Tibet Plateau under the rule of Tubo Kingdom was called "Tubo." During the Yuan Dynasty, Tibet formally became an administrative region under the Chinese central government, ending its century-long chaos. But the entire Tibetan areas were called "Tubo" as it did in the Tang Dynasty. The Tibetan areas in Qinghai, southern Gansu and northwestern Sichuan were called Amdo, now called "Amdo Tibetan area." The Tibetan-inhabited areas in Sichuan's Garze, Yunnan's Degen and Tibet's Qamdo were called "Kham," and is now called the Kham region. Tibetans in this area are called "Khampa."

Today's Qinghai-Tibet Plateau covers Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai Province, southern and southwestern Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, western and northwestern Sichuan Province, southern Gansu Province, and northwestern Yunnan Province. The plateau is inhabited by over 30 ethnic groups, including the Tibetan, Han, Tu, Mongolian, Hui, Naxi, Lisu, Uygur, Tajik, Yi, Bai, Qiang, Nu, Yugur, Drung, Moinba, Lhoba, Sherpa and Deng. The main religions on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau include Tibetan Buddhism, Bonism, Islam and Catholicism.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is one of the most fascinating tourist destinations for its magnificent scenery and diversified sights. The ethnic folklore, costumes and ornaments, living habits and religious beliefs attract tourists from all over the world. The snow mountains on the plateau, represented by Mt. Qomolangma, Qogir, Namjagbarwa, Kawagebo, Gongga, Siguniang, Kangrinboqe, and Xiannairi, are lofty, magnificent, precipitous and mysterious, but are personalized and regarded as deities. People awe them, worship them, love them, and hope these holy mountains can bring happiness to human beings.

The Potala Palace is a crystallization of human wisdom on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Along with the Jokhang Monastery, Zhaxilhunbu Monastery, Sagya Monastery, Yongbu Lhakang, the Guge Kingdom

remains, Samyai Monastery, Baiqoi Monastery, Sera Monastery, Zhebug Monastery, Ta'er Monastery, Labrang Monastery, Qambaling Monastery, Dege Scripture Printing House, and Songzamling Monastery, it narrates the history of the people on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the brilliant achievements in culture and art. Wandering in magnificent halls or on ruins of ancient buildings, tourists are attracted by beautiful murals, exquisite *thangkas*, solemn sculptures, numerous scripture scrolls and other cultural relics.

During holidays, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is a scene of great joy. Whether in cities or countryside; at the foot of snow-capped mountains or within temples; on open ground in grove or pasture at lakeshore, people are immersed in festive joy. There are numerous holidays to celebrate, including both national holidays, such as New Year's Day, the International Labor Day on May 1, the National Day on October 1, and local festivals, such as Tibetan New Year, Sunning the Buddha Festival, the Butter Lantern Festival, the Langshan Festival, the Shoton Festival, the Horse Racing Festival, the Kyagqen Art Festival, the Paying Homage to the Holy Mountain Festival, and the Hua'er Festival. These holidays on the plateau are colorful, dazzling the eyes of tourists. On the vast plateau, people of different ethnic groups and in different age groups wear different costumes and ornaments. Even within one ethnic group, people's clothes are different from place to place and in different tribes. The colorful festivals on the plateau are one of the greatest attractions to tourists from all over the world.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, like a magnetic stone, attracts travelers, pilgrims and scholars from all over the world. Traveling on the "roof of the world" to explore its secrets, people not only drink in the beauty of its natural scenery, but also experience folklore, historical sites and religious holy land in the depth of the plateau. This is not merely a sightseeing tour, but rather an unforgettable spiritual journey. The fascinating tour is like a cup of mellow wine, whose luscious aromatics linger on and on in your mind.





布达拉宫之晨
The Potala Palace in the morning.



岗巴宗堡遗址与喜马拉雅山脉
The site of Kamba Zong castle and the Himalayas.



珠穆朗玛峰 (海拔 8848 米) 是世界最高的山峰 ▷

Mt. Qomolangma (8,848 meters above sea level),
the highest mountain in the world.







第一章 圣地拉萨

Chapter I. Lhasa the Holy Land

文 亨 By Wen Heng

清晨，随着天空中巨大的轰鸣声的迫近，一架波音 757 飞机划破东方天边的云层，出现在拉萨贡嘎机场的上空，之后，平稳地降落在海拔 3700 多米的机场跑道上。一队队来自世界各地的旅游者刚刚走下舷梯，便在热情的旅游接待人员引导下，乘上了前往拉萨市区的汽车，直奔下榻的宾馆。旅游者开始了他们在“世界屋脊”的旅行……

拉萨，是世界上最富魅力、最有特色的城市之一。海拔 3658 米的高度，会使初来的旅行者感到眩晕，但也会随之感到自豪，毕竟这里是位于世界屋脊的圣地。

已有 1300 年历史的拉萨，有着深厚的历史文化底蕴，众多的文化遗迹和浓重的宗教氛围，使人

有如在时光隧道中漫游，进入了神的世界。今日的拉萨市政建设日新月异，但古城所固有的古典与纯朴，还不时地使游人感到新奇与宁静。

公元 7 世纪中叶以前，今天的拉萨市所在地，还只是一片人烟稀少、野羊出没的沼泽湖泊，被称之为吉雪卧塘。当时属于实力雄厚的苏毗部落。公元 7 世纪初，位于山南地区的雅隆部落崛起。年轻有为的赞普松赞干布，在一个夏天阳光明媚的日子，沐浴在清澈的吉曲河（拉萨河）中。他抬头仰望，见这里景色幽美、水草丰盛，而在平原的中央，布达拉山和药王山突兀而起、巍然对峙，地形十分险要，认为在此可以创基立业。松赞干布毅然决定，把统治中心迁至卧塘，并在布达拉山顶筑宫居住。

唐贞观十五年（公元 641 年），25 岁的松赞干布，在完成了统一西藏大业之后，迎娶了唐朝文成公主。文成公主进藏后，夜观天象、日察地形，认定卧塘乃罗刹女之心脏所在，湖水系妖魔之血液，应在此建庙以镇之，填土以塞其血路。公主又根据五行相承相克的理论，建议用白山羊背土填湖。寺庙建成后，因为藏语“山羊”叫“惹”、“土”称为“萨”，所以寺庙被称为“惹萨”。由于寺庙规模浩大，矗立在卧塘之上，成为王都的象征，因而人们又把最初为寺庙（大昭寺）命名的“惹萨”（藏语“山羊背土”）赐给了这座城市。但以后将“惹萨”译成汉文时，却译成了“逻些”，之后又变成“拉萨”，也即“圣地”之意了。

布达拉宫前的广场

The square in front of the Potala Palace.

远眺布达拉宫 ▷

The Potala Palace seen from afar.

