



主 编: 刘 英

副 主 编: 吴庚新 周庆生

责任编辑: 秦凤京

撰 文: 周庆生

翻 译: 韩清月

摄 影:秦凤京 姚天新 胡敦志 王慧明 王希宝

王文波 卞志武 严向群 陈 宇 刘 卫

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THE WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE

世界文化遗产





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PREFACE

天坛,是现存世界上最大的祭天建筑群,1998年12月被联合国教科文组织列入《世界遗产名录》。

天坛位于北京紫禁城的东南方,是明、清两朝皇帝举行祭天大典的场所,占地 273 公顷,平面布局北圆南方,象征天圆地方。两道坛墙将坛域分为内外坛,祭祀建筑集中于内坛,并分为南北两部分,南部为"圜丘坛",北部为"祈谷坛"。南北两坛由一条长 360 米的甬道一丹陛桥相连。祈谷坛内坛西隅有斋宫。因中轴线东移而显得宽阔的西外坛南侧则分布有神乐署、牺牲所。

祭天在中国有非常悠久的历史,自西周时期统治者提出"君权天授"的理论后,祭天作为统治者维护自己政权的一种活动,得到历代皇帝的重视。朱元璋在南京建立明朝后.立即在钟山之阳(南)建圜丘坛以祭天.在钟山之阴(北)建方泽坛以祭地。不久改天地分祭为合祭制度,建天地坛合祭皇天后土。明成祖朱棣迁都北京后,仿照南京的规制建立了天地坛。北京天地坛建成于明朝永乐十八年十二月(公元1421年2月),主要建筑为大祀殿,基础在现在祈谷坛位置上,规模比南京天地坛较大。天地合祭110年后,嘉靖皇帝又将天地合祭改为分祭。在北京城的东、南、西、北四郊建立了日坛、天坛、月坛和地坛,天坛又称为圜丘坛,专门祭祀皇天上帝。

天地分祀后大祀殿即废止,嘉靖十七年(公元1538年)拆大祀殿,在其旧址上仿古明堂建大享殿,以举行秋享上帝典礼。大享殿建在三层圆形坛基上,殿为圆形,三层重檐攒尖金顶,上檐蓝色,中檐黄色,下檐绿色,象征天地人三位一体。

清朝建立后,保留了明代的祭坛和祭祀制度,只是大享殿不再举行大享礼,改为举行祈谷典礼。乾隆十六年(公元1751年)将大享殿改名祈年殿,门改为祈年门,以符祈谷之意。次年三层重檐及皇乾殿、祈年门、皇穹宇等建筑的屋顶均改为蓝色琉璃瓦,以象天色。乾隆十四年(公元1749年),乾隆皇帝将圜丘扩建,坛制不变,但栏板,望柱改为汉白玉,坛面则改铺艾叶青石,上层中心为一圆形石块,外铺九圈扇形石块,内圈九块,其余以九的倍数递增,中、下层亦皆如此。各层栏板、望柱数目和台阶数都为九或九的倍数,以象天数。北京天坛经过乾隆时期的调整完善之后,整个坛墟制度最终形成。同时,祭天礼仪制度也在乾隆时期得以最后确定,明清两朝,北京天坛共有22个皇帝举行过654次祭天大典。1911年清朝皇帝退位,祭天制度废除,天坛也从此失去了皇家祭坛的地位。但1914年袁世凯为复辟帝制,重新制定了一套祭天礼仪及祭祀服饰,于当年冬至举行祭天大典。不久袁世凯身死,洪宪帝制被废。这次祭祀也成为天坛历史上最后一次祭天大典。

作为中国祭天文化的物质载体, 天坛积淀了深厚的民族文化内涵。天坛文化涉及中华民族文化的诸多领域,包括历史、政治、哲学、天文、建筑、历法、音乐、绘画、园林、伦理等等,是中国传统文化的集大成。1998年12月2日,在日本京都召开的第22届世界遗产委员会会议上,天坛被列入世界遗产名录。同时,世界遗产委员会对天坛的世界遗产价值作出了高度评价。"一、两千多年来,中国一直处于封建王朝统治之下,而天坛的设计和布局正是这些封建王朝合法性的象征。二、许多世纪以来,天坛所独具的象征性布局和设计,对远东地区的建筑和规制产生了深刻的影响。三、天坛是建筑和景观设计之杰作,朴素而鲜明地体现出对世界伟大文明之一的中华文明产生过深刻影响的一种极其重要的宇宙观。"

目前,在人民政府的精心保护下,天坛公园正以其深厚的民族文化内涵、宏伟的古典建筑景观、古朴的祭坛环境氛围吸引着成千上万的中外游客前来参观游览。

天坛公园园长 刘芙



The Temple of Heaven is the largest existing architectural complex in the world. It was included in the world heritage list by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in December 1998.

Located to the southeast of the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven was where the emperors of the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties worshipped the heaven. It covers 273 hectares and the layout is circular in the north and square in the south to symbolize the circular heaven and the square earth. The compound has two surrounding walls, with the main worshipping buildings located inside the inner wall. The main worshipping buildings -- the Circular Mound Altar in the south and the Altar of Prayer for Grain in the north -- are linked with a 360-meter-long passage, called Danbiqiao or Red Stairway Bridge. To the west of the Altar of Prayer for Grain lies the Hall of Abstinence. There are also the Divine Music Hall and the Sacrifice House in the southwest of the architectural compound.

The Chinese have a long history of worshipping the heaven. After the rulers of the Western Zhou Dynasty (c. 11th century-771 BC) claimed that they were empowered by the heaven, the worshipping of the heaven had been carried on by almost all state rulers as a way to uphold their right of administration.

After Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, founded his regime in Nanjing, he ordered a circular mound altar built on the southern slope of the Zhongshan Mountain to worship the heaven and a square altar built on the northern slope to worship the earth. Later, the worshipping ceremonies of the heaven and the earth were merged into one and held in one temple.

After Zhu Di, the second emperor of the Ming Dynasty, moved the capital from Nanjing to Beijing, he had the Altar of Heaven and Earth built in the new capital based on the standards of the Nanjing one, but larger in size. The construction was completed in February 1421, on today's Altar of Prayer for Grain. The Hall of Worshipping was the main place to stage the ceremony.

About 110 years later, Emperor Jiajing issued an order to separate the worshipping ceremony of the heaven from that of the earth. Four altars were then built in the four directions (east, south, west and north) of the city of Beijing to worship the sun, the heaven, the moon and the earth. The Temple of Heaven, also known as the Circular Mound Altar, was built for worshipping the heaven.

The Hall of Worshipping was abandoned after the worshipping separation and was demolished in 1538. On the location erected the Hall of Fruition, where ceremonies were held in autumn to present the reaped crops and fruits to the heaven. The hall, sitting on a three-layer round base, was a round building with triple-eaved roof: the upper eave was blue, the middle eave was yellow and the lower green. This symbolized the combination of the heaven, the earth and the people.

The rulers of the Qing Dynasty, which replaced the Ming Dynasty, kept the worshipping system, but changed the function of the Hall of Worshipping from presenting fruits to the heaven to prayer for good harvests. The hall was renamed

the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests in 1751, and the entrance was also renamed the Gate of Prayer for Good Harvests. The following year, the roofs of major buildings were replaced with blue glazed tiles to follow the color of the sky. In 1749, Emperor Qianlong had the Circular Mound Altar expanded. The railing boards and balustrades were replaced with white marble, and the ground was paved with blue stones. In the middle of the upper terrace lied a round stone surrounded by nine concentric rings of stones. The number of stones in the first ring was nine, in the second 18, and so on, up to 81 in the ninth ring. The middle and bottom terraces also had nine rings each. Even the numbers of the carved railing boards, the balustrades and the steps were also the multiples of nine, to coincide with the astronomical phenomena. With all these adjustments, the altar system was finally completed and the worshipping of the heaven was formed during the reign of Emperor Qianlong.

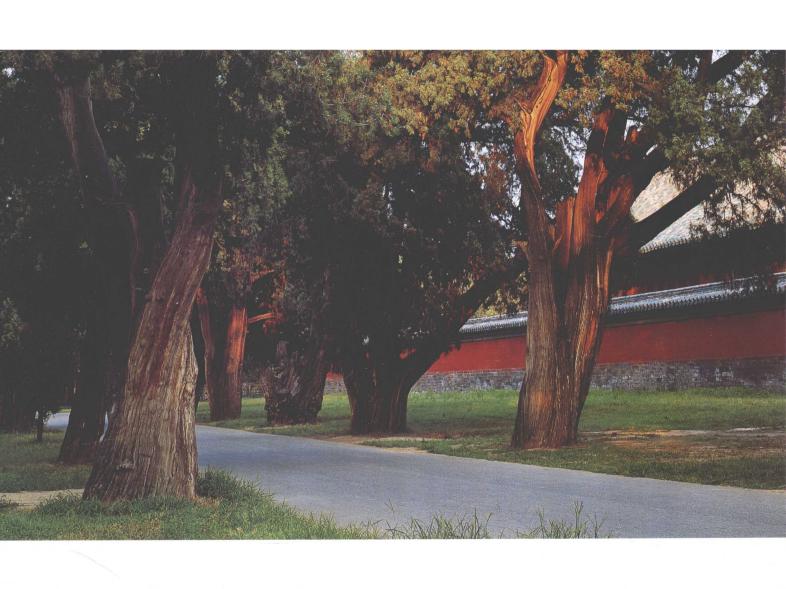
A total of 22 Ming and Qing emperors had held 654 ceremonies to worship the heaven in Beijing. The worshipping was abandoned in 1911 when the last emperor of the Qing court abdicated and the Temple of Heaven wound up its role as an imperial altar. However, the last ceremony was staged right on this place on the Winter Solstice (the 22nd solar term) of 1914 by Yuan Shikai who attempted to restore the dethroned monarch. Yuan had worked out new ceremony rites and tailored special dresses for the ceremony. Shortly after, Yuan died and his monarch regime was overthrown. That marked the last ceremony held to worship the heaven at the Temple of Heaven.

As the place for worshipping ceremony, the Temple of Heaven represents deep cultural connotation of the Chinese nation. It is a comprehensive expression of the Chinese history, politics, philosophy, astronautics, architecture, calendric system, music, painting, gardening art and ethics, and synthesizes the traditional culture of the Chinese nation.

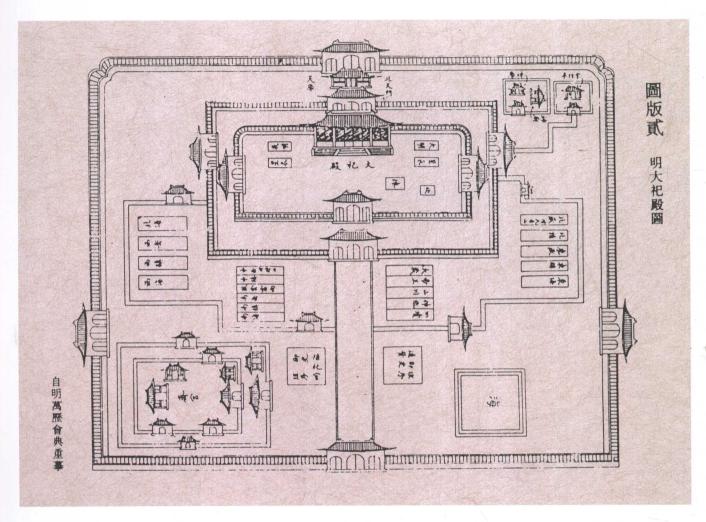
On December 2, 1998, the Temple of Heaven was placed onto the world heritage list at the 22nd conference of the World Heritage Committee. The committee came to the conclusion that the design and layout of the Temple of Heaven were good symbols of the legitimization of the feudal courts in a country that had been under the feudal rule for more than 2,000 years. The unique symbolic design and layout have exerted great influences to the architecture designing in the far-east region over the past centuries. The outstanding design of the Temple of Heaven is an evident but simple demonstration of an important world outlook that had produced a significant impact on the Chinese civilization, one of the great civilizations in the world.

Every year, the Temple of Heaven receives thousands of millions of visitors from near and afar, who are amazed at the complicated cultural presentation, the grand ancient architecture and the secluded surroundings in the largest architectural compound in the world.

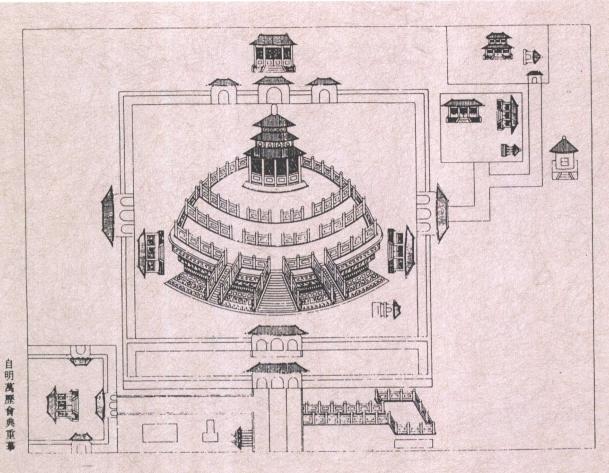
Liu Ying



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明会典祀坛(天地坛)图。天地坛建于明永乐18年(公元1421年), 是合祀天地的祭场。 Drawing of the Altar of Heaven and Earth of the Ming Dynasty. The altar was built in 1421 to stage the worshipping ceremonies of both the heaven and the earth.



明嘉靖建大享殿图。明嘉靖32年(公元1545年)拆去大祀殿,在原址建造圆型的大享殿,用于祈祷丰年。

Drawing of the Hall of Fruition of the Ming Dynasty. After the Hall of Worshipping was demolished in 1545, this circular hall was built on the base to pray for good harvests.

HALL OF ABSTINENCE

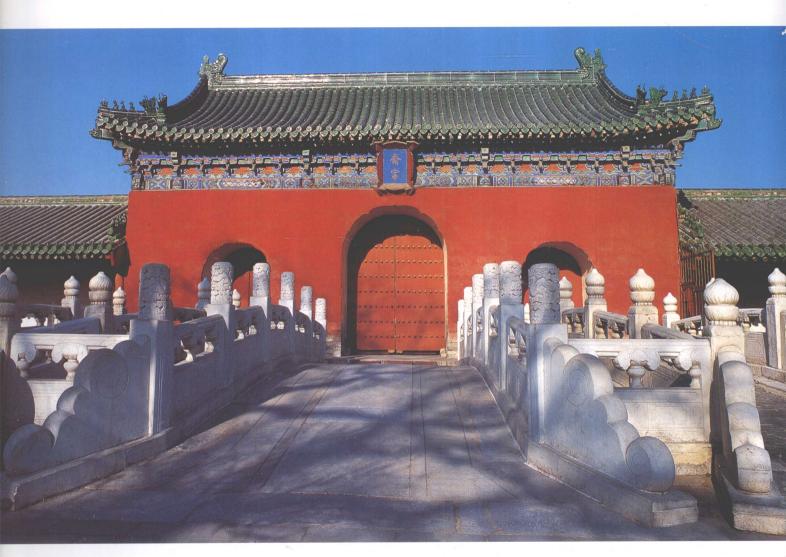
斋宫建于明永乐十八年(1421年),是皇帝举行祭天 大典前进行斋戒的场所, 位于祈谷坛内坛西南隅。斋宫 坐西朝东, 宫内建有无梁殿、寝殿、钟楼、值守房和巡 守步廊等,建筑均采用绿色琉璃瓦,以两重宫墙、两道 御沟围护。斋宫布局严谨, 环境典雅, 是我国祭祀斋戒 建筑的代表作。

斋宫的建筑非常独特,其建筑的坐向和屋顶的颜色 与故宫的皇家建筑有所不同。斋宫作为天子居所的小皇 宫,没有采用宫廷建筑坐北朝南的形式,而是坐西朝 东,是因为古代统治者为了巩固自己的政权,把自己称 为"天子",天坛是皇天上帝即"天子"的"父亲"居 住的地方,"天子"到天坛后不再敢称自己为皇帝,他 居住的地方自然不能再按皇帝的规制建设为坐北朝南的 建筑了。建筑屋顶的颜色也只能按太子的等级用绿色。 祭天前, 按礼仪规定皇帝要斋戒三天, 头两天在紫禁城 内的斋宫斋戒, 第三天才到天坛斋戒。所以故宫里也有 斋宫, 但其建筑形制是按皇帝的等级建设的, 与天坛的 斋宫完全不一样。而斋宫环境清幽, 意境深远, 更是到 天坛值得一游的好去处。





斋宫全景 A full view of the Hall of Abstinence.



斋宫正门
The entrance to the Hall of Abstinence.

HALL @F ABSTINEN@E

The Hall of Abstinence was first built in 1421. It was where the emperor had fast before the worshipping ceremony. Located to the southwest of the Altar of Prayer for Grain, the Hall of Abstinence faces east. Enclosed inside two surrounding walls and two defense ditches are the Beamless Hall, the Rest Hall, the Bell Tower and the Watch House. All buildings here have green glazed tiles. The precise layout and quiet environment make the hall a representative work among all fast buildings on the mainland.

The buildings at the Hall of Abstinence are different from those in the Forbidden City in terms of roof color and the direction they face. As the place where the emperor had the fast, it didn't follow the usual norm of imperial buildings to face south, but instead facing east. There was a special reason for this. Since the ancient ruler claimed him to be the son of the god, and the Temple of Heaven was where the god lived, he wouldn't call himself "emperor" or "the supreme ruler on earth" at the temple so as to show respect to his father, nor would he dare to build houses for himself that faced south. The houses would all face east and have the same green roof as those for prince.

According to the worshipping rites, the emperor should have three days of fast before going to the temple to offer sacrifices to his father — two days in the Forbidden City and one day in the Temple of Heaven. Therefore, there was also a Hall of Abstinence inside the Forbidden City, but it was constructed with imperial standards.