

Chief Editors: Ning Aihua Li Zhonghua

A Passage to China

走近中国

文化 · 教育 · 商务 · 旅游概览

*Aspects of Culture,
Education,
Business,
Tourism and More*

China Ocean University Press

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Preface

The People's Republic of China has been undergoing transformational changes since 1978 and the unprecedented rapid development has caught the world's eye. The idea has lingered for some time as to what could be done to enhance the understanding of the oriental country of China by our foreign friends. We each of us have worked with our foreign experts, teachers or students from overseas in various ways, and all of us have some experiences in different cultures of foreign lands where we have met even more foreign friends. We find that nearly all of the foreign friends have shown great interest either in Chinese culture, Chinese education, Chinese economic development or Chinese natural beauty. There emerged the idea that we should do something, or rather, we should write a book, for the easy and better understanding of the historical and oriental country of China by our foreign friends. That idea pulled us together, and we discussed our idea and agreed on the aim of this book, an aim to offer some knowledge about China to our foreign friends, who are interested in China, who are interested in the Chinese culture, who would like to pursue their education in Chinese universities, who would like to make a tour for sightseeing of the historical relics and who would like to do business in China. And finally we put pen to paper for its realization.

We all think that China needs to be understood as well as to understand the world. Since the Chinese government pursued open-door policy to the outside world in 1978, China's annual economic growth has been over 7% in over 25 years in succession, and what is more, China took another step to merge herself in the world system by having successfully entered World Trade Or-



ganization in November of 2001.

Though this book is meant to be a practical reader, it can also serve as supplementary reading materials for overseas students of the Chinese culture. We each of us will be very grateful if readers find this book of some use and help for the porch toward the understanding of China, whatever aspect it might be.

This book is one of joined hands, with Associate Professor Ning Aihua and Professor Li Zhonghua acting as chief editors and Professor Dai Hua and Professor Zou Weining as assistant chief editors. Professor Dai Hua contributed to Chapters One, Three, Nine, and Eleven with reference to some contents from *Investing in China* by Pan Zhihong, Professor Li Zhonghua to Chapters Two, Four and Seven, Associate Professor Ning Aihua to Chapters Eight, Ten and Eleven, Professor Zou Weining to Chapters Three and Five, Associate Professor Li Yajing to Chapters Three and Six and Lecturer Li Ping to Chapters Five and Twelve. We'd hereby like to extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Wang Zengrong for his contributions to Chapter Eleven and to Mr. Diao Xiaofang for his kind assistance, and also to some of our students for their kind help. Thanks should also go to our foreign friends Alan Allott from New Zealand and Jeff Simes from the USA for the assistance and support they gave to the book.

Finally, we will never forget Professor Guan Huashi, President of Ocean University of China, and Professor Wu Dexing, Vice-President of Ocean University of China, for their support and necessary assistance in making this publication a reality.

Editors

May 6, 2004

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Chapter 1 The Nation

Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.

— Confucius

I. Introduction

Location — China, the People's Republic of China as its official name, is situated in East Asia, on the western shores of the Pacific Ocean. It has a land boundary totaling over 22,800 kilometers, with 15 contiguous countries, adjoining Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the east, Mongolia in the



north, Russia in the northeast and Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan and Tajikistan in the northwest, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan in the west and southwest and Burma, Laos and Vietnam in the south. Across the Yellow Sea to the east are the Republic of Korea and Japan, and across the East China Sea and the South China Sea to southeast and south are the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei. China has a total land area of about 9.6 million square kilometers, ranking only after Russia and Canada, as the third largest country in the world.

Territory — The territory of China, from north to south, measures some

5,500 kilometers, stretching from the center of the Heilongjiang River north of the town of Mohe (latitude $53^{\circ}30'N$) to the Zengmu Reef at the southernmost tip of the Nansha Islands (latitude $4^{\circ}N$). When north China is still covered with snow, people in south China are busy with spring plowing. From west to east, the nation extends about 5,200 kilometers from the Pamirs (longitude $73^{\circ}4'E$) to the confluence of the Heilongjiang and Wusuli Rivers (longitude $135^{\circ}5'E$), with a time difference of over four hours. When the Pamirs are cloaked in night, the morning sun is shining brightly over east China.

Topography — China's topography is varied and complicated, with towering mountains, basins of different sizes, undulating plateaus and hills, and flat and fertile plains. China is mostly mountains, high plateaus, deserts in the west; plains, deltas, and hills in the east. A bird's-eye view of China would indicate that China's terrain descends in four steps from west to east.

The top of this four-step "staircase" is the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Averaging more than 4,000 meters above the sea level, the highest and largest, it is often called the "roof of the world", with the Mt. Qomolangma of 8,848.13 meters, the world's highest peak, in the Himalayan Mountains between China and Nepal. Starting from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in the west, the topography of China leads towards the ocean in the east.

The second step includes the Inner Mongolia, Loess and Yunnan-Guizhou plateaus, and the Tarim, Junggar and Sichuan basins, with an average elevation of between 1,000 meters and 2,000 meters.

The third step, about 500—1,000 meters in elevation, begins at a line drawn around the Greater Hinggan, Taihang, Wushan and Xuefeng mountain ranges and extends eastward to the coast. Here, from north to south are the Northeast Plain, the North China Plain and the Middle-Lower Yangtze Plain. Interspersed amongst the plains are hills and foothills.

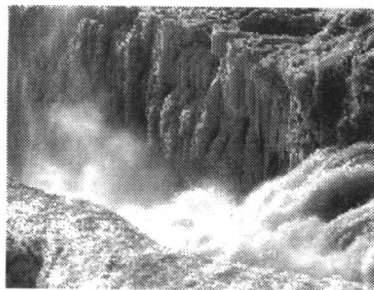
The fourth step of the staircase is flanked to the east and south on the continental shelf with less-than-200-meter depth of water, by the Bohai Sea, the Continental Sea, and the Yellow Sea, East China Sea and South China Sea, and the marginal seas of the Pacific Ocean, with a total maritime area of more than 4.73 million square kilometers. China's coast is more than 32,000 kilometers long, with more than 5,400 islands scattered over its vast territorial waters. The largest of these islands is Taiwan, with an area of about

36,000 square kilometers, and the second largest is Hainan with an area of 34,000 square kilometers, both as provinces of China. Diaoyu and Chiwei islands, located to the northeast of Taiwan Island, are China's easternmost islands. The many islands, islets, reefs and shoals on the South China Sea, known collectively as the South China Sea Islands, are subdivided into the Dongsha, Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha island groups.

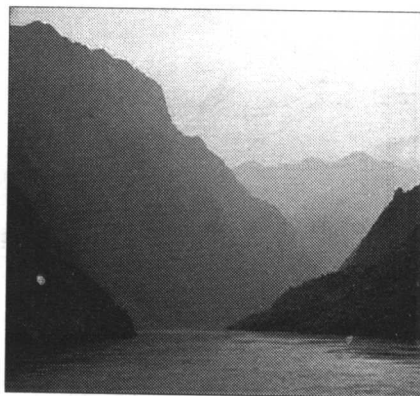
Waters — Civilization starts with water, and anywhere in the world the truth holds. The same is true with China. China has more than 1,500 rivers, each draining 1,000 square kilometers or larger areas. About 2,700 billion cubic meters of water flow along these rivers, taking up 5.8 percent of the world's total. Most of the large rivers find their sources in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and as a result, China is supposed to be rich in water-power resources.

The Huanghe River (the Yellow River)

— The Huanghe River, in the hearts of the Chinese people, is the mother of China. The Yellow River valley was one of the birthplaces of ancient Chinese civilization with lush pastureland and abundant mineral deposits. It is the second longest river in China, 5,464 kilometers in length, with a



catchment area of 752,000 square kilometers, empties into the sea. The Yellow River obtained its name from the color of the mud which it carries along in its low reaches and which is the source of the sediments which in turn creates problems for the management of the river. The riverbed is getting higher and higher with the sedimentation, creating a so-called suspending river above the land. Therefore, much of the river management effort has been devoted to improving the flood prevention capability and to taming the river.



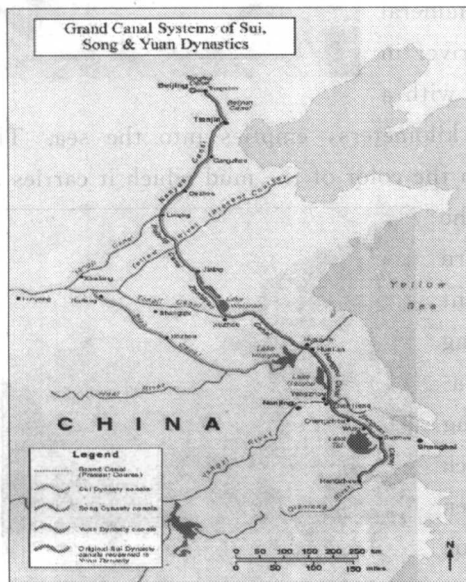


The Changjiang River (the Yangtze River) — The Changjiang River is the longest river in China, and the third longest in the world, next only to the Nile in northeast Africa and the Amazon in South America. It originates in the Qinghai Province, and is 6,300 kilometers long, flowing through nine provinces, and catching an area of 1,809 million square kilometers, reaching 19 percent of the total area of China. The middle and lower Yangtze River's warm and humid climate, plentiful rainfall and fertile soil make the area an important agricultural region. Known as the "golden waterway", the Yangtze is a transportation artery linking west and east, through many industrialized areas, and with its estuary lying to the north of Shanghai. And the famous Three Gorges Project is being built on the Yangtze River.

The rivers in China can be categorized as exterior and interior systems with the Yangtze, Yellow, Heilongjiang, Pearl, Liaohe, Haihe, Huaihe, Lancang, Yarlungzangbo and Ertix rivers belonging to the former, taking up 64 percent of the country's total land area, flowing into the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean or the Arctic Ocean respectively, and with 2,179-kilometer-long Tarim River, the longest interior one in China, and many others belonging to the latter, taking up 36 percent of China's total land area, flowing into inland

lakes or disappearing into deserts or salt marshes.

The Grand Canal — The Grand Canal, in addition to those endowed by nature, is a famous man-made river, running from Beijing in the north to Hangzhou in the south. The work on the Grand Canal first began as early as in the fifth century BC. It links five major rivers: the Haihe, Yellow, Huaihe, Yangtze and Qiantang rivers and passes through the city of Tianjin and four provinces: Hebei, Shandong,



Jiangsu and Zhejiang. With a total length of 1,801 kilometers, the Grand Canal is the longest as well as the oldest man-made waterway in the world.

II. The State

Administrative Division — The present-day administrative division in China includes 4 municipalities directly under the central government: Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing; 2 Special Administrative Regions: Hong Kong and Macao; 23 provinces: Anhui, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guizhou, Hainan, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanxi, Sichuan, Taiwan, Yunnan, Zhejiang; and 5 autonomous regions: Guangxi, Nei Mongol (Inner Mongolia), Ningxia, Xinjiang, and Xizang (Tibet).

Population — Chinese Population, according to the two Communiques on Major Figures of the 2000 Population Census by National Bu-



reau of Statistics, the People's Republic of China, from the results of the fifth national population census in China, on March 28, 2001 and on April 2, 2001 respectively, has reached 1,295.33 million (including 1,265.83 million of the mainland, 6.78 million of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 440 thousand of Macao Special Administrative Region and 22.28 million of Taiwan Province and of Jinmen, Mazu and a few other islands of Fujian Province).

Population growth on the mainland, compared with the population of 1,133.68 million from the 1990 population census (with zero hour of July 1, 1990 as the reference time), increased by 132.15 million persons, or 11.66 percent over the past 10 years and 4 months. The average annual growth was 12.79 million persons, or a growth rate of 1.07 percent.

The result shows that there were 348.37 million family households with a

population of 1,198.39 million persons on the mainland. The average size of family household was 3.44 persons, or 0.52 persons less as compared with the 3.96 persons of the 1990 population census; as to the sex composition on the mainland, 653.55 million persons or 51.63 percent were males, while 612.28 million persons or 48.37 percent were females, and the sex ratio (female = 100) was 106.74; as to the age composition on the mainland, 289.79 million persons were in the age group of 0—14, accounting for 22.89 percent of the total population; 887.93 million persons in the age group of 15—64, accounting for 70.15 percent and 88.11 million persons in the age group of 65 and over, accounting for 6.96 percent, and as compared with the results of the 1990 population census, the share of people in the age group of 0—14 was down by 4.80 percentage points, and that for people aged 65 and over was up by 1.39 percentage points.

The results also show that for the composition of nationalities on the mainland, 1,159.40 million persons or 91.59 percent were of Han nationality, and 106.43 million persons or 8.41 percent were of various national minorities. Compared with the 1990 population census, the population of Han people increased by 116.92 million persons, or 11.22 percent; while the population of various national minorities increased by 15.23 million persons, or 16.70 percent. As for the composition of educational attainment for the mainland, 45.71 million persons had finished university education (referring to junior college and above); 141.09 million persons had received senior secondary education (including secondary technical school education); 429.89 million persons had received junior secondary education and 451.91 million persons had had primary education (the educated persons included graduates and students in schools). According to the census, on the mainland of China, 85.07 million persons were illiterate (i. e. people over 15 years of age who can not read or can read very little), but compared with the 15.88 percent of illiterate people in the 1990 population census, the proportion had dropped to 6.72 percent, or down by 9.16 percentage points.

As for urban and rural population on the mainland of China, there were 455.94 million urban residents, accounting for 36.09 percent of the total population; and that of rural residents stood at 807.39 million, accounting for 63.91 percent. Compared with the 1990 population census, the proportion of

urban residents rose by 9.86 percentage points.

Ethnic Groups — China's 56 ethnic groups form a united, multi-ethnic country with the Han people accounting for 91.59% of the total population and the rest are minority ethnic groups. As the majority of the population is of the Han ethnic group, China's other ethnic groups are customarily referred to as the national minorities. The Han people can be found throughout the country, though mainly on the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, the Yangtze River and the Pearl River valleys, and the Northeast Plain. The national minorities, though fewer in number, are also scattered over a vast area, in approximately 64.3 percent of Chinese territory, mainly distributed in the border regions from northeast China to north, northwest and southwest China. Yunnan Province, home to more than 20 ethnic groups, has the greatest diversity of minority peoples in China. The largest minority ethnic group is the Zhuang nationality, totaling about 15.6 million people while Lhoba, the smallest, has only more than 2,300 people. The Han people have their own spoken and written language, known as the Chinese language, which is commonly used throughout China. The Hui and Manchu ethnic groups also use the Han (Chinese) language. The other 53 ethnic groups have their own spoken languages and 23 ethnic groups have their own written languages. The name Han originated over two thousand years ago during the Han Dynasty.

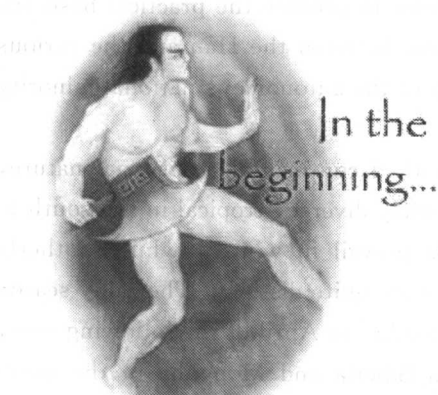
In most of China's cities and towns, two or more ethnic groups live together. Taking shape over China's long history, this circumstance of different ethnic groups "living together in one area while still living in individual compact communities in special areas" continues to provide the practical basis for political, economic and cultural intercourse between the Han and the various minority peoples, and for the functioning of the autonomous national minority areas system.

Climate — China's climate has a marked continental monsoonal nature, characterized by a great variety, or extremely diverse, tropical in the south to subarctic in the north. Northerly winds prevail in winter, while southerly winds reign in summer. The four seasons are quite distinct. The rainy season coincides with the hot season. From September to April of the following year, the dry and cold winter monsoons from Siberia and Mongolia in the north gradually become weak as they reach the southern part of the country, resul-

ting in cold and dry winters and great differences in temperature. The summer monsoons last from April to September.

The warm and moist summer monsoons from the oceans bring abundant rainfall and high temperatures, with little difference in temperature between the south and the north. China's complex and varied climate results in a great variety of temperature belts and dry and moist zones. In terms of temperature, the nation can be sectorized from south to north into equatorial, tropical, subtropical, warm-temperate, temperate, and cold-temperate zones; in terms of moisture, it can be sectorized from southeast to northwest into humid (32 percent of land area), semi-humid (15 percent), semi-arid (22 percent) and arid zones (31 percent).

China experiences a few typhoons every year along southern and eastern coasts, and also damaging floods, sometimes earthquakes, droughts or tsunamis. But the current environmental issues are air pollution from reliance on coal; water shortages, particularly in the north; water pollution from untreated wastes; deforestation; the loss of agricultural land to soil erosion and economic development; and desertification. To tackle these problems, China has entered the following international agreements: Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling, and also signed Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol and Nuclear Test Ban.



III. The Chinese Legends

The Chinese civilization, as we mentioned above, originated along the Yellow River, providing abundant water and the fertility of the yellow earth forever created from it. The Chinese civilization is rich not only in anthropological excavations, but also in the legends as follows from the earliest times of the Chinese history.