







# WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN CHINA

CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS





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联合国教科文组织北京办事处代表 青岛泰之

世界遗产是人类的宝贵记忆，具有物质和文化价值上不可替代、不可再现的性质。对于一个国家或民族来说，自然、文化遗产首先是历史的见证，同时也为其文明的延续、发展提供了无尽的原动力和精神资源；另一方面，世界遗产又是人类的共同财富，对促进不同国家、民族和文化类型之间人们的交流、理解及其共同繁荣有着重要的辅助作用。有组织、有计划地整理和保护全世界范围内的文化和自然遗产，是人类不容推卸的共同责任，也体现对历史、传统和一切文明成果的尊重。联合国教科文组织大会于1972年颁布《世界文化与自然遗产保护公约》，就是秉承了这样的宗旨。

中国是一个文明古老悠久、历史遗存丰厚、自然风光壮丽的国度，自1985年加入《世界文化与自然遗产保护公约》以来，已经成为发掘、研究和保护文化和自然遗产的一支积极力量。至2003年6月为止，中国共有28处文物古迹和自

然景观列入“世界遗产名录”，一种艺术形式列入“人类口头和非物质文化遗产代表作”，目前还在积极进行遗产的申报工作。

中国的文化和自然遗产不仅属于中国，也属于全世界、全人类。我们面前的这本《中国的世界遗产》大型画册，就是对这28处遗产的全面、集中的展示。它不仅以精美的图片资料表现了中国的世界遗产的独特价值，还以生动的文字介绍了与之相关的文物、历史、地理、自然知识，帮助读者了解中国在数千年历史中形成的文化形态、政治理想、道德观念、哲学思想、美学追求、生活情趣，甚至中国的民族精神与民族性格，启发人们思考向传统文化和浩茫自然汲取滋养与力量的意义所在。相信它会赢得读者的喜爱。

联合国教科文组织对中国在保护人类文化和自然遗产方面所作的努力表示赞许。希望这本画册的出版更能对此有所助益。

青島泰之



# Foreword

Yasuyuki Aoshima

Director and Representative UNESCO Office Beijing

World Heritage is a treasured memory for humanity. Their material and cultural value is irreplaceable and irretrievable. For a nation and a people, natural and cultural heritage primarily serves as testimony to a history. In addition, it is a driving force and a source of inspiration for the continued development of that civilization.

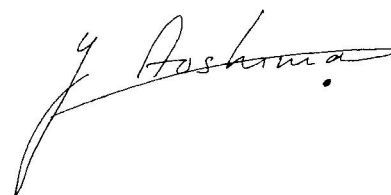
At the same time, World Heritage is a collective wealth shared by humanity that is instrumental in helping to facilitate exchange, understanding and a growing success shared between countries, peoples and cultures. Humanity must not ignore a mutual responsibility to sort and protect cultural and natural heritage throughout the world through organization and planning, and to show respect for the history, traditions and achievements of all civilizations. In 1972, the General Conference of UNESCO approved the "Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage" precisely to achieve this aim.

As a country with an ancient civilization, a rich historical legacy and magnificent natural scenery, China has already become an active force in the discovery, research and protection of cultural and natural heritage since ratifying the "Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage" in 1985. As of June, 2003, China had 28 cultural relic

sites and natural landscapes on the "World Heritage List", one artistic contribution included in the "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity", and is still pursuing the heritage application process.

China's cultural and natural heritage belongs not only to China but to the whole world and all of humanity. This book, "China's World Heritage", is a large-scale pictorial that focuses at length on these 28 legacies. Lively descriptions introducing the related cultural items, history, geography and natural expertise are accompanied by exquisite photographs displaying the unique value of China's World Heritage. They help the reader to understand the shape of Chinese culture developed over thousands of years, political ideology, moral concepts, philosophical ideas, aesthetic pursuits, life interests and even the conduct and spirit of the Chinese people. They also inspire people to think about the meaning of traditional culture and the natural environment as a source of power and sustenance in a way we trust will gain the reader's support.

UNESCO embraces China's efforts to safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of mankind. It is our hope that the publication of this pictorial will act as further encouragement.



# The Great Wall

As many see it, the Great Wall is the symbol of the Chinese nation.

The Great Wall was not built in a day. It is “great” in terms of both distance and time. From the 7th century BC to the 17th century AD, more than 10 dynasties were involved in building and rebuilding of the Great Wall. The different sections of the Great Wall built in different dynasties are different in length and location. Therefore, if one wants to know how long the Great Wall is, one must tell which dynasty’s Great Wall one refers to.

The Great Wall as we see today is basically the wall rebuilt or renovated in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Renovation of the old Great Wall started almost immediately after the dynasty was established and the project lasted until 1600, 44 years before it collapsed. The Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty starts at Mt. Hushan of eastern Liaoning Province in the east and ends at Jiayuguan Pass in Gansu Province in the west, snaking through Liaoning, Hebei, Tianjin, Beijing, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Shaanxi, Ningxia and Gansu provinces, with a total length of 6,700 kilometers. The project was also the last largest renovation of the Great Wall in history. The Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty is even 400 kilometers longer than China’s longest river, the Yangtze.

Ruins of the Great Wall built or renovated in other dynasties can still be seen in central and north China. The earliest Great Wall was built in 656 BC - maybe even earlier -- in the State of Chu. Separate states tore apart the nation at the time as they fought wars with each other. The Great Wall of the Chu Kingdom was built for military defense and proved to be effective. Then other states started to build similar walls. The walls built by different states vary in length, ranging from a few hundred kilometers to one or two thousand.

All these walls failed to block the advance of armies of the Qin State. In the year 221 BC, Emperor Shihuang unified the country and established the Qin, China’s first feudal

dynasty. For a time, those walls seemed no longer necessary. However, the nomadic Xiongnu ethnic group in the north, or the “Huns” as referred to in the West, often made incursions into the Qin territory. To defend the empire’s northern borders, Emperor Shihuang ordered a project to connect the defense walls in the north. That is how the Great Wall or the “Great Wall of ten Thousand *Li*” came into being, extending east to west for well over 5,000 kilometers.

The Qin Dynasty collapsed in 206 BC, and was succeeded by the Han, which was to rule China until 220 AD. Invasions by the Xiongnu horsemen became even more frequent and intense during the early period of the new dynasty, even though there was intermittent peace. “The moon of the Qin Dynasty still shines over the border passes of the Han, and soldiers are yet to return from battles fought ten thousand *Li* away.” These lines from a Tang Dynasty poem say something about what happened in China during that period. As a result, the Great Wall was extended further west and, at the same time, an “Outer Great Wall” - walls beyond sections of the Great Wall of the Qin Dynasty - was built. That brought to 10,000 kilometers the total length of what is broadly referred to as the “Great Wall”. The Great Wall was designed as a defense system. In practice, however, it provided protection to the newly developed Silk Road as well.

Most ancient Chinese emperors were ethnic Hans. During Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589), however, eight ethnic minority regimes ruled north China in succession. These regimes also built walls for defense. Wall building continued into the Song Dynasty (960-1279), Liao Dynasty (916-1125) and Jin Dynasty (1115-1234). Walls built in the Jin Dynasty totaled 4,000 kilometers long.

Scores of long walls were built in the various dynasties, which are collectively called the “Great Wall”. Some were consolidated, some renovated, and some just deserted. For example, some sections of the Great Wall of the Ming Dy-

nasty were shifted several hundred kilometers south from their counterparts of the Qin Dynasty. Experts estimate that the Great Walls built in the past 2,000 years, if put together, can be as long as 50,000 kilometers.

Building or renovation of the Great Wall was a time consuming project, and required a immeasurably huge input of human, financial and material resources. Some walls were repeatedly renovated. Was it possible that the various dynasties gave up building or renovating the walls? Did they have any defensive solutions more effective than the Great Wall? These questions have been debated until today.

We can find in the Chinese map that the Great Wall mostly coincides with the natural demarcation line between the agricultural area of China and its pastureland. Almost in every dynasty, the nomadic ethnic groups would invade the south. They were good at shooting arrows and had very good mobility on horsebacks. They would run away when chased, and would come back immediately after the defense forces withdrew. Even with the Great Wall at their disposal, central government troops would find it hard to defend the vast expanses of pastureland and desert in the north. Besides, logistics could hardly be guaranteed. Despite these and other difficulties, the Great Wall was extended and renovated again and again. It is believed that for invaders, surmounting the Great Wall would be costly in terms of time and logistics, and that even if they succeeded in doing that, the central government would have enough time to amass troops and fight back.

The Great Wall was quiet in the Tang (618-907), Yuan (1279-1368) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties. In the year 628, when some court officials proposed that the Great Wall be renovated, Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty said a downright no: "I don't need such a project to wipe away the enemies from the desert." The Yuan and Qing dynasties were established by nomadic ethnic groups from the north, and



001

therefore they had the vast territory of pastureland and desert in the north under very good control. So they had never brought the renovation or rebuilding of the Great Wall on their agenda.

Natural topography was made good use of in the building of the Great Wall. No matter how hard the working conditions were, the Great Wall would be built wherever the topography is of strategic importance or with difficult access. In terms of engineering technology and defense facilities, the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty was the best. Sections of the Great Wall around Beijing were the most important because it formed the fortification line in defense of the capital. Those sections of the Great Wall, which have become tourist spots today such as Badaling, Jinshanling, Mutianyu and Simatai sections, the Shanhaiguan Pass in Hebei Province and Huangyaguan Pass in Tianjin, all belonged to fortification line to the north of the capital.

Most sections of the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty were built with bricks and stones, and some were built with rammed earth. The sections of the Great Wall in Beijing, Hebei, Shanxi and Gansu are seven to eight meters high on the average, and four to five meters wide on the top. On the top of the wall, the outside defense wall is about two meters high with battlements for shooting arrows and watching. In order to shoot those enemies down at the bottom of the wall, some projecting platforms with battlements were built every little distance. In addition, watchtowers were built on the wall. The towers usually have two stories. The upper floor is a platform for watching and fighting and the ground floor is for storing weapons and supplies and also for soldiers to stay.

Passes were built along sections of the Great Wall, at important crossings and where mountains and sea meet. There are as many as more than 1,000 passes along the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty and the best known include



Shanhaiguan Pass that faces the Bohai Sea in what is now Hebei Province, Juyongguan Pass near Beijing and Jiayuguan Pass in Gansu Province, China's far west. In between those big passes, there are smaller passes. Some important passes had several fortification lines for each. For example, the Badaling section of the Great Wall was, in fact, the most important fortification line of Juyongguan Pass.

Beacon towers were built along the Great Wall every certain distance. Once enemy came, soldiers on the beacon towers would light signal fires at night and smoke in the daytime to send a message. In the Ming Dynasty, soldiers would fire cannons to signal alarm when the enemy came. When 100 enemy soldiers were spotted, soldiers at a beacon tower would fire one cannon shot and light a wisp of smoke. When some 500 enemy soldiers came, two cannon gun shots would be fired and two wisps of smoke lit. When more enemy soldiers came, more cannon shots would be fired and more wisps of smoke lit.

So the Great Wall is not just a wall but a military defensive system including passes, watchtowers, barracks and beacon towers. Different sections were defended by different military units in the Ming Dynasty, and the entire Great Wall was divided into nine military zones, which together had about one million soldiers under their command.

In order to solve the problem of military supplies, farmers were immigrated to the frontier areas to do farming while building the Great Wall. Besides, soldiers also took part in farming in their spare time. The barren and bleak frontier area therefore gradually turned into towns and cities. Fighting was temporary, and often times, the gate of a pass would be kept open. Battlefields would be turned into markets. People from outside the pass would bring in their horses, sheep or furs in exchange for grain, tea, cotton, silk and cloth. Such business was carried out either between folks or on official basis. Exchanges had also been conducted in such fields as production, culture and customs. As a result, connection between the nomadic ethnic groups and farming civilizations in the central plain was becoming more and more close.

The Great Wall was inscribed on the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage in 1987.

001 The Simatai section of the Great Wall in Beijing.

002 The Jiankou section of the Great Wall in Beijing. The Great Wall we see today is largely left over from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).



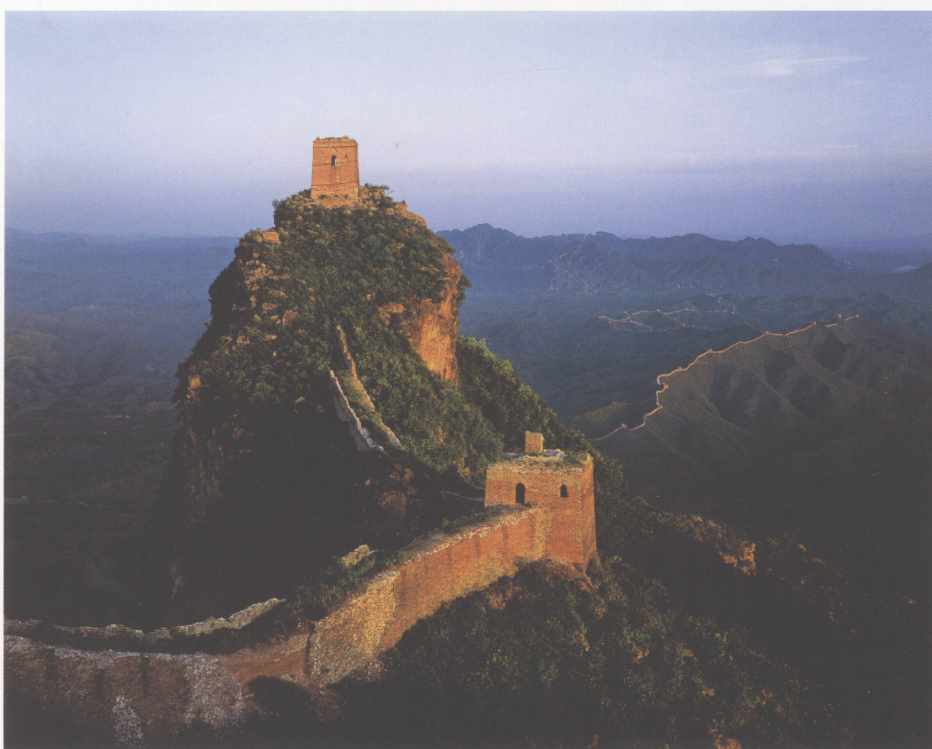








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003 The Badaling section of the Great Wall in Beijing. As a part of the defense system for the capital, it is especially strong and complete and therefore representative of what is known as the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty.

004 Watchtower atop the Simatai section of the Great Wall, Beijing. It is also known as the "Capital-Viewing Watchtower" because in ancient times, those on the tower had a clear view of Beijing in a fine day.





005 Ruins of a section of the Great Wall belonging to the Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD). Three “Great Walls” were built in different dynasties, the wall of the Han being 10,000 kilometers in length.



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006 Ruins of a section of the Great Wall belonging to the Qin Dynasty (221BC-206BC). The Great Wall of the Qin is about 5,000 kilometers long.



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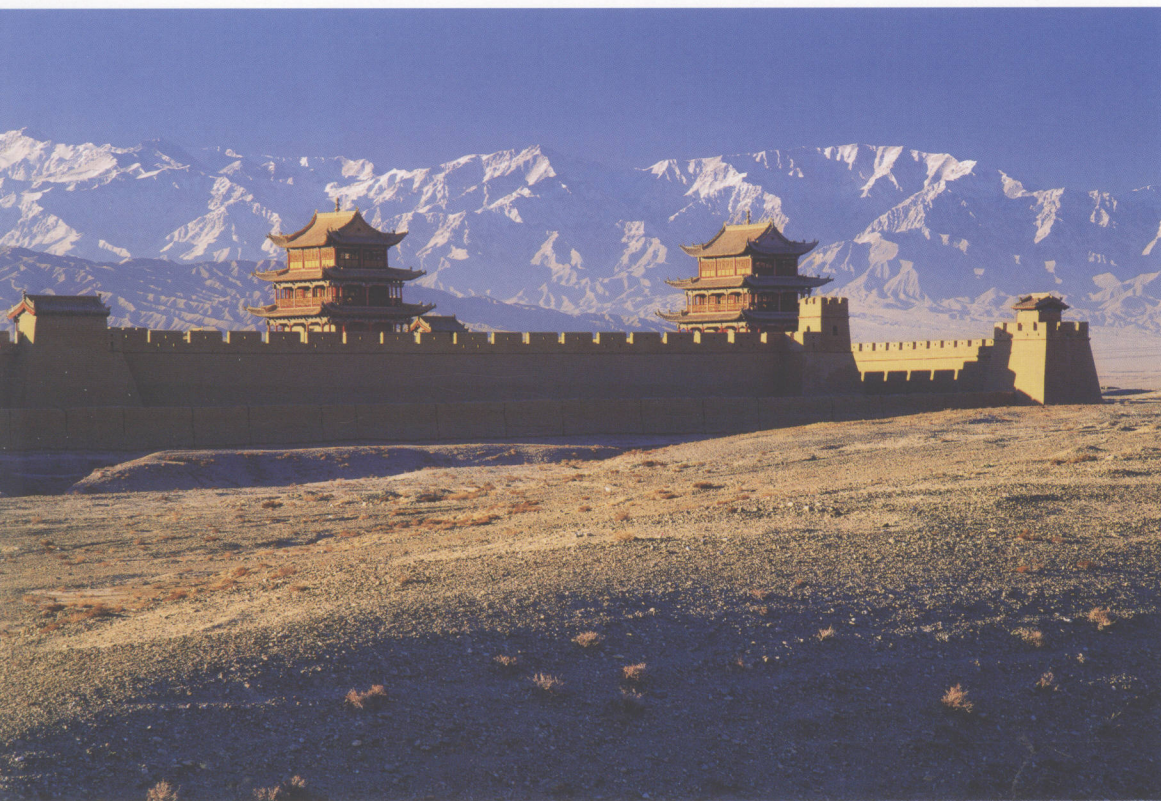












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007 The Jinshanling section of the Great Wall that dates back to the Ming Dynasty.



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008 The Jiayuguan Pass is where the Ming Dynasty Great Wall ends in the west. Jiayuguan was an important hub of communication on the Silk Road that linked ancient China with countries and regions to its west.

009 Photo shows the Wohushan section of the Great Wall, on an ancient pathway that linked China's northeast and Mongolian grasslands to the north of the national capital.