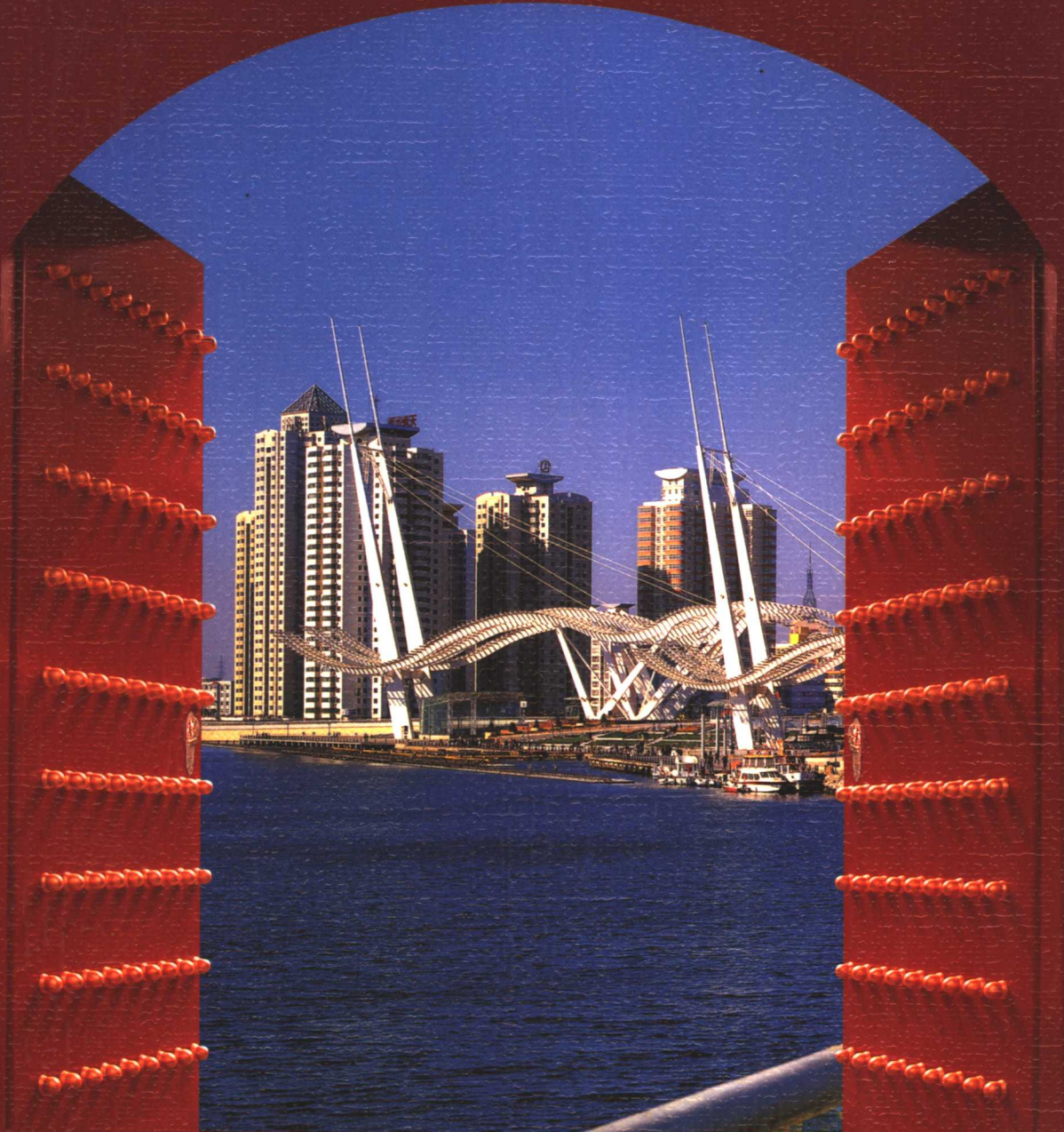


PANORAMIC CHINA

TIANJIN

Lustrous Pearl of the Bohai Gulf

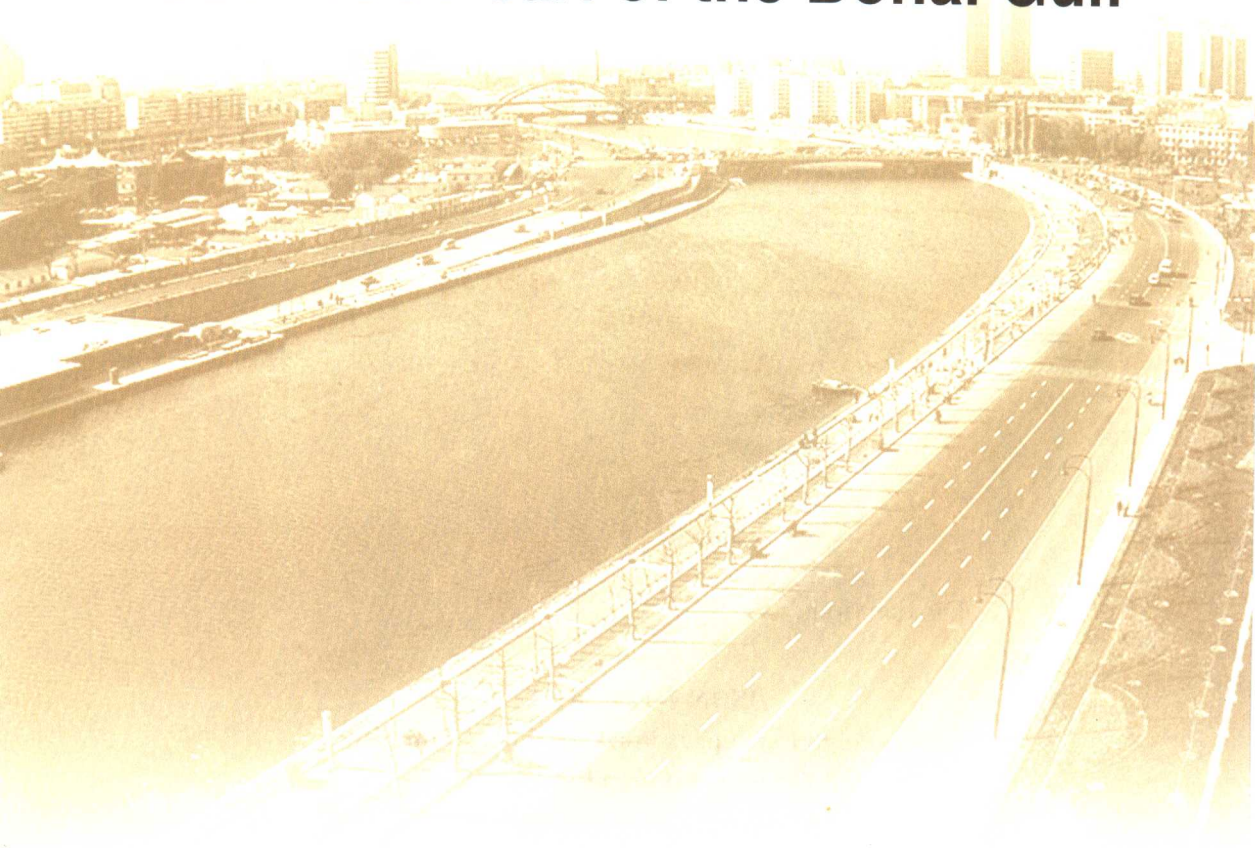


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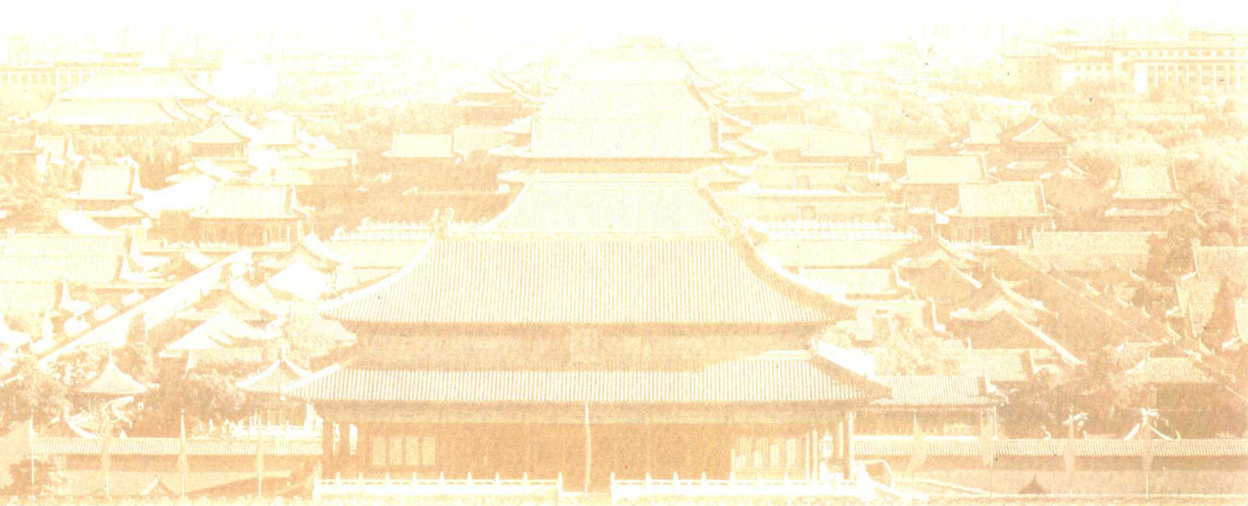
Du Jianxiong Zhang Wei

Introduction

China has 23 provinces, four municipalities directly under the Central Government, five autonomous regions and two special administrative regions. Due to geographical and topographical differences and climatic variations, each area has its own unique natural scenery. The mountains in the north of the country are rugged and magnificent, the waters in the south are clear and turbulent, the Gobi in the northwest shines brilliantly in the sunlight, the hills in the southeast are often shrouded in floating fog, green waves of sorghum and soybean crops undulate over the vast fields of the northeast, and the mountains in the southwest, with sequestered villages and terraced fields, look tranquil and picturesque.

There are 56 ethnic groups in China. The Han, making up the overwhelming majority of the population, mainly live in the eastern and central parts of the country, while many ethnic groups with smaller populations live in the west. In China, all ethnic groups, regardless of size, are equal and respect each other. Each ethnic group has its own folk customs, religious beliefs and cultural traditions, and most use their own language and script. Regional autonomy is practiced in areas where ethnic minorities live in compact communities. All the ethnic groups call themselves "Chinese." They are courteous and friendly. In the ethnic-minority areas, the quiet environment, quaint buildings, exquisite fashions, unsophisticated folk customs and hospitality of the local people hold a great appeal to visitors from afar.

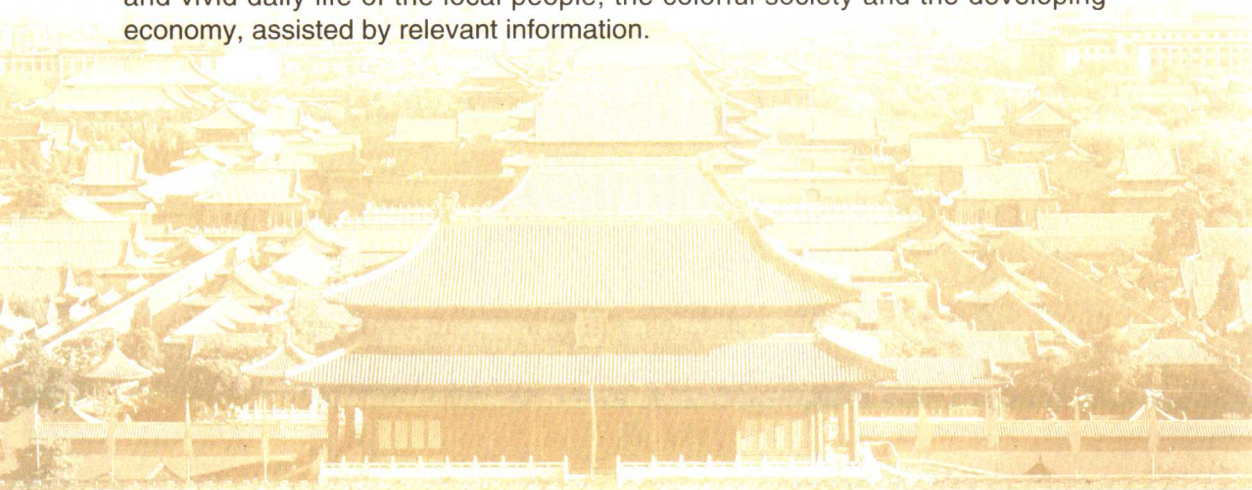
China boasts 5,000 years of recorded civilization and a brilliant culture. The country is home to such world-renowned cultural treasures as the Great Wall, terracotta warriors and horses of the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty, Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang, and Ming and Qing imperial palaces and mausoleums, and large numbers of ancient architectural masterpieces, including temples, Buddhist pagodas, residential buildings, gardens, bridges, city walls and irrigation



works. There are also cultural relics unearthed from ancient sites, including painted pottery, jade ware, bronze ware, large and ornate tombs and foundations of historical buildings, and many more as yet undiscovered. The museums of China's various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions house thousands of cultural relics and works of art, among which are treasures rare in the world, displaying the long history of China and the splendid Chinese culture from different aspects. The strong, deep-rooted Chinese culture has always influenced the mentality and moral standards of the Chinese people, having developed continually in pace with the civilization. A careful study of today's Peking opera, kunqu opera, shadow plays, calligraphy, painting, paper-cutting, and even the flower-shaped steamed buns on the kitchen range of farmers will reveal elements of traditional Chinese culture as well as replications of the art of the past.

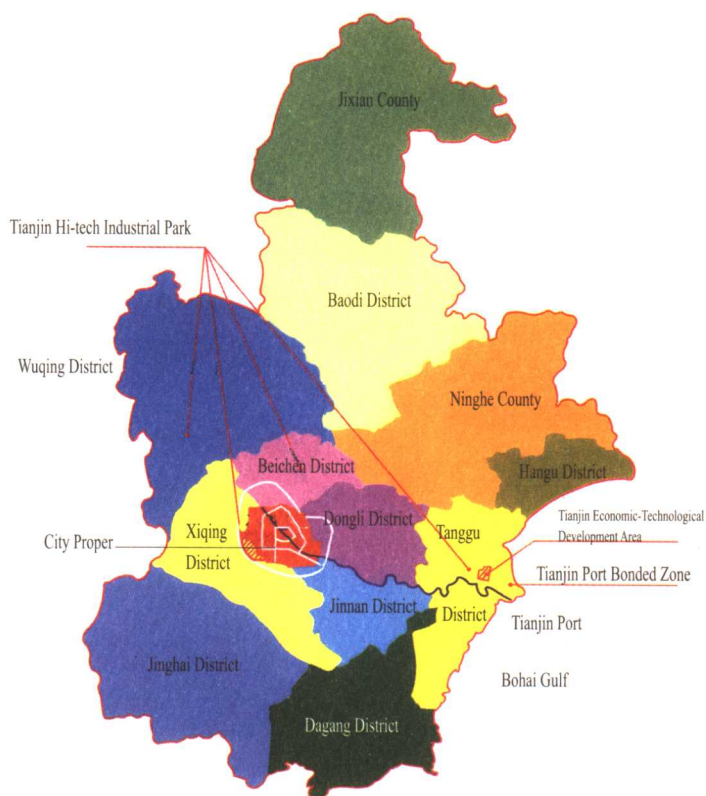
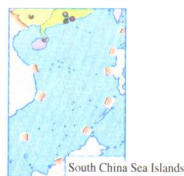
Like other countries of venerable age, China has suffered grievous calamities. During the century and more before the 1950s, the Chinese people made unrelenting struggles for the prosperity of the country, and national independence and liberation. A large number of insightful people and revolutionaries, cherishing all kinds of dreams for a strong China, studied the ways of the West in a quest for prosperity and strength, and borrowed the revolutionary experience of foreign countries. At last, the Communist Party of China, proceeding from the reality of China, and relying on the working people, founded a brand-new country, the People's Republic of China, in 1949. Since then, the Chinese people have made persistent efforts and explorations for the grand revitalization of the Chinese nation. The Chinese people's efforts in the past two decades and more have resulted in outstanding achievements, with rapid social progress, a well-developed economy, and a modern civilization and traditional culture enhancing each other.

It is easy to have a quick look at China's past and present, but it takes time to gain a panoramic knowledge of China. The "Panoramic China" series is meant to assist readers, especially those overseas, in this respect. Each volume in the series focuses on a province, municipality or autonomous region, describing, with illustrations, the outstanding characteristics of each area from different perspectives. Through this series, the reader will acquire knowledge of the real and vivid daily life of the local people, the colorful society and the developing economy, assisted by relevant information.





Location of Tianjin on
the Map of China



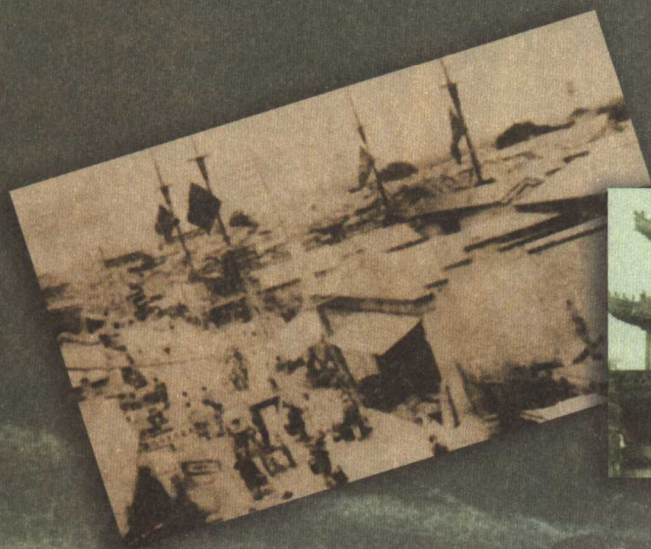
Administrative
Map of Tianjin



The Bund at Tanggu

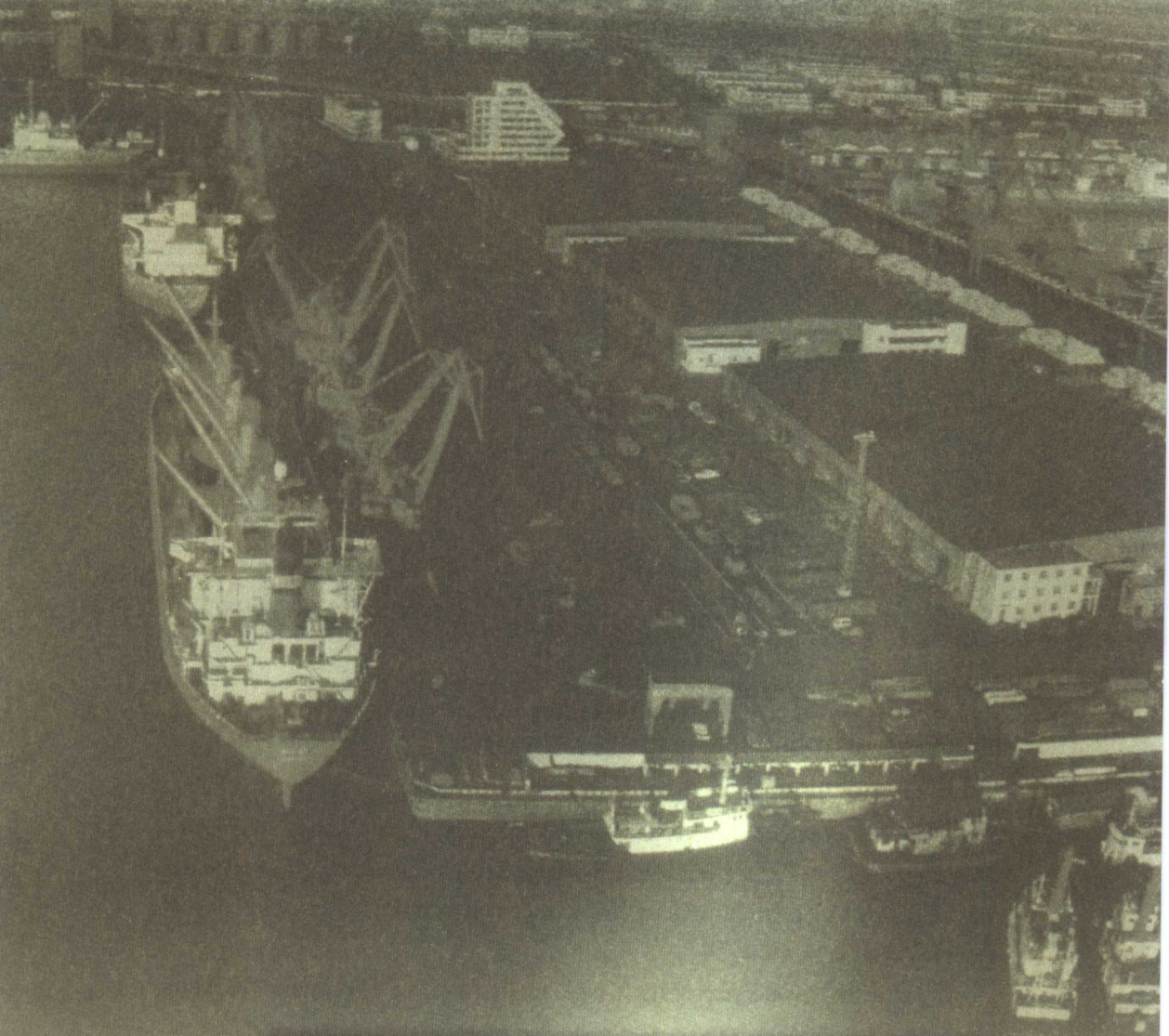


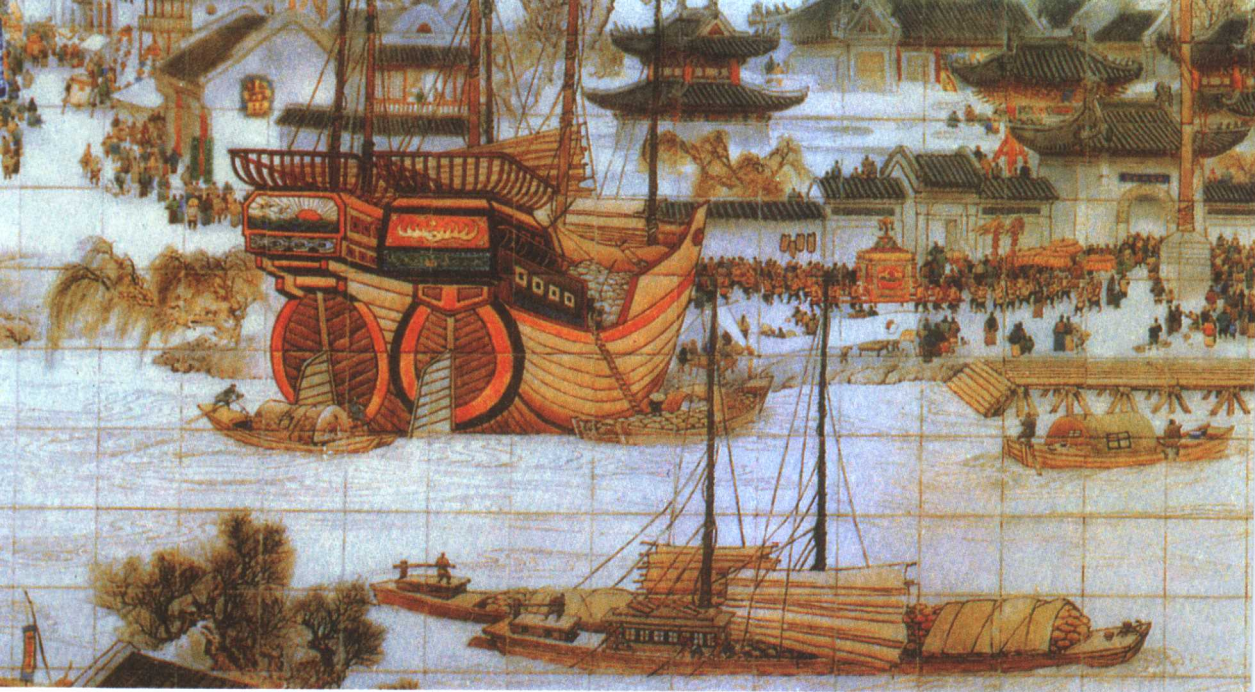
Introducing Tianjin



Along the coast of the Bohai Sea lies a beautiful place. If she had an identity card, it would show her name Tianjin, her alias Jin, her former names of Jingu and Jinmen, and her address, between $38^{\circ}34'$ and $40^{\circ}15'$ N and $116^{\circ}43'$ and $118^{\circ}04'$ E in the eighth international time zone of the eastern hemisphere.

It was because of water that Tianjin took shape, grew strong and prospered. Her origins go back to the opening of China's Grand Canal during the Sui Dynasty (581-618). The meeting point of the south canal with the north canal, today's Sanchahekou "three-branch estuary" was the birthplace of Tianjin, which from the mid-Tang Dynasty (618-907) on, became the port for shipping grain and silk from south to north. As a land and water transshipment, Tianjin attracted more and more attention. Zhigu (an old name for Tianjin) Village was set up during the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234). Under the Yuan (1279-1368), Haijin



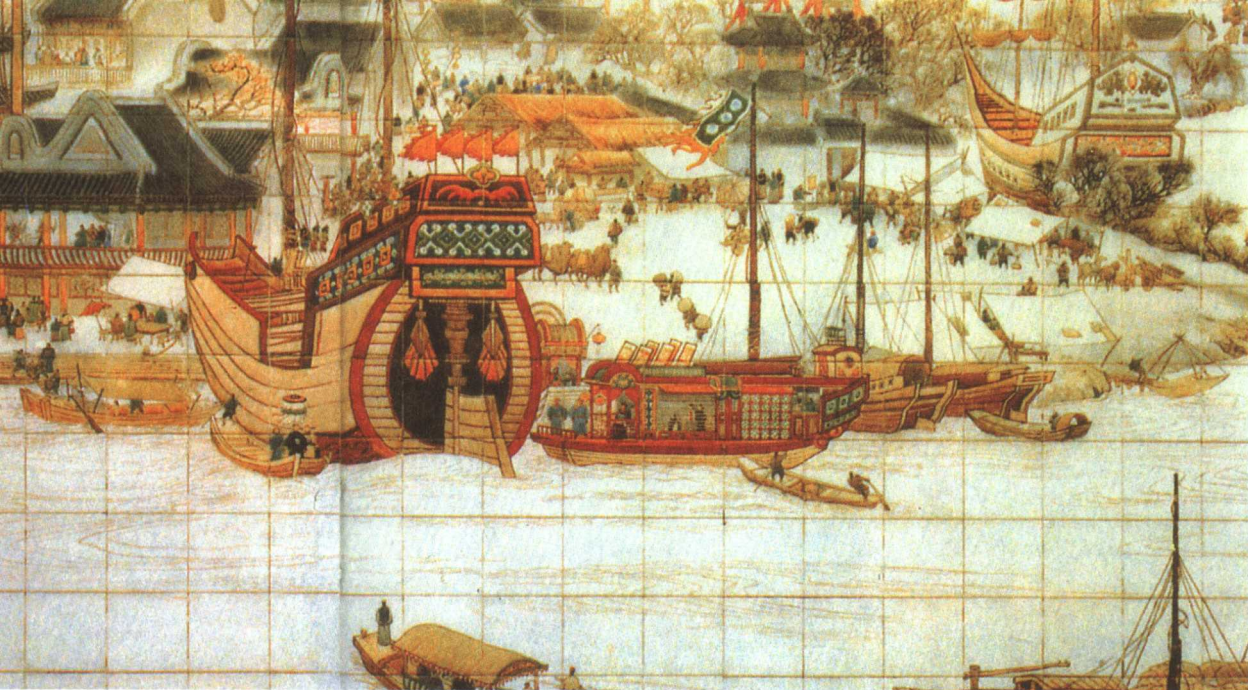


Section of *Superintended Transport on the Luhe River* (old name for Haihe River) by the Qing Dynasty artist Jiang Xuan, showing prosperous scenes of river and sea-going vessels congregating on the river several hundred years ago

Town was built up along the Gushui River (an old name for the Haihe River), and a ferry crossing took shape. Even before the name Tianjin was adopted, it was gradually emerging as a town of military importance and a center for transportation of grain by water.

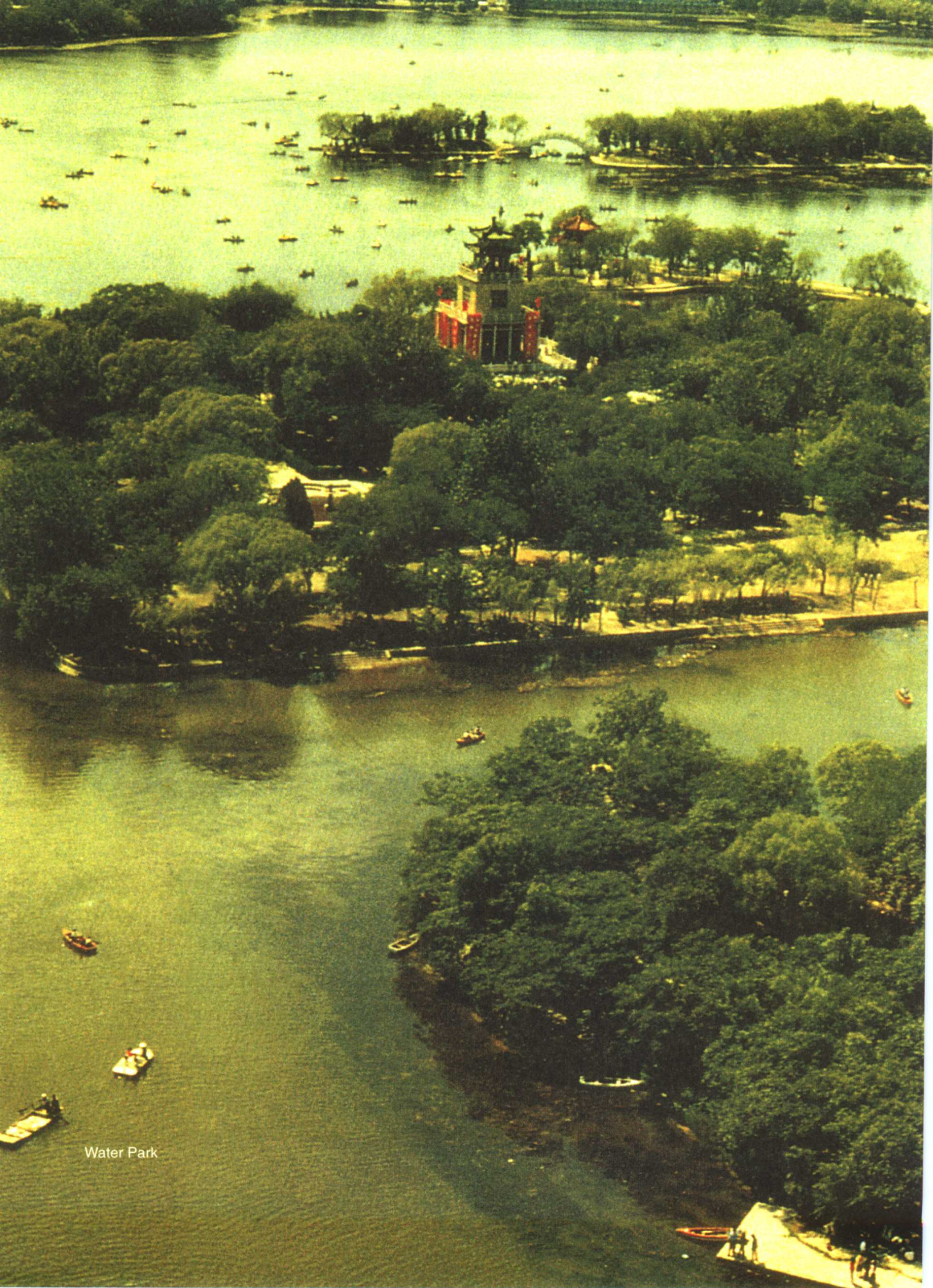
In 1404, the second year of his Yongle reign, Emperor Chengzu of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), ordered that a fort be established and a city built at Zhigu and named the city “Tianjin,” literally “ford of the Son of Heaven.” The name recalled the emperor’s smooth fording of the river at that point on his way to give battle to the Mongols in the north. This day, December 23, became Tianjin’s birthday.

Tianjin has been through many changes and renewals in its history. During the reign (1723-1735) of Emperor Yongzheng in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), Tianjin was promoted to prefecture status, directly under the Zhili Province. Later Tianjin County, with the same boundaries as the prefecture, was established by the prefectural government, and in 1913 the county replaced the prefecture. In 1928, the special city of Tianjin directly under the National Government was set up in the central area of Tianjin County which came under the jurisdiction of Hebei Province. (In January

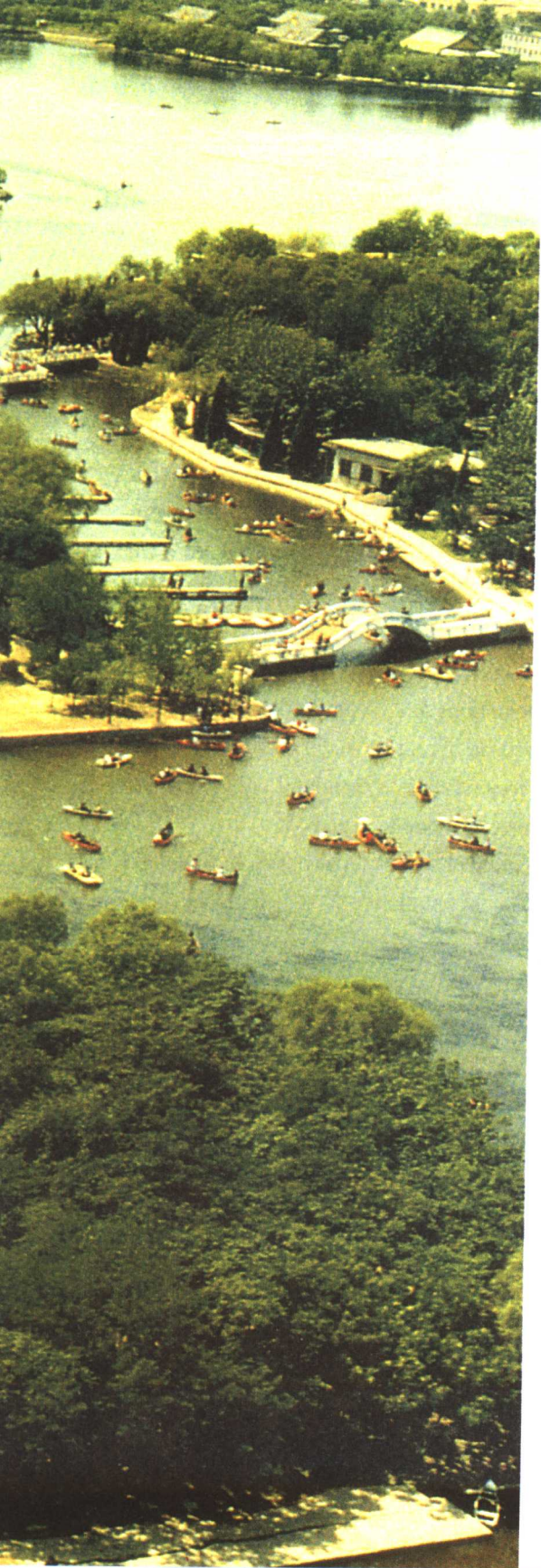


1934, a boundary was delimited between Tianjin special municipality and Tianjin County, which consisted of four villages.) In June 1930, Tianjin Special City was renamed Tianjin Municipality under the Executive Yuan, the highest administrative organ of the Republic of China (1912-1949). In November that year, Tianjin was transferred to the jurisdiction of Hebei Province and became its capital. In 1935, Hebei Province moved its government to Baoding and Tianjin reverted to the Executive Yuan. During the period of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-1945) the puppet regime changed its name back to Tianjin Special City. Following victory by the Chinese, the city reverted to the title of Tianjin Municipality, and that is still its name today. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Tianjin has remained a municipality directly under the central government, apart from the period between February 1958 and January 1967 when it came under Hebei Province and served as its capital for a time.

The Tianjin map also experienced many changes in size. Administratively speaking, at its smallest, it meant only the downtown or city area, whilst at its largest it had jurisdiction over the downtown area, Tanggu, Hangu, the suburbs, and the 12



Water Park



counties of Wuqing, Jinghai, Huanghua, Cangxian, Yanshan, Baxian, Ningjin, Wuqiao, Jiaohe, Xianxian, Hejian, and Renqiu. Today Tianjin administers six urban districts (Heping, Hexi, Hebei, Hedong, Nankai, and Hongqiao), three coastal districts (Tanggu, Hangu, and Dagang), six suburban districts (Dongli, Jinnan, Xiqing, Beichen, Wuqing, and Baodi), and three counties (Jixian, Ninghe, and Jinghai), covering a total area of some 11,000 sq km.

Compared with ancient cities with more than a thousand years' history, Tianjin is still in its infancy. But size is not the issue with cities — "If there is a river, it will thrive. The flow of a river brings great fortune." Historical records show that in the Yuan Dynasty, Tianjin's annual grain shipment capacity was 2,000,000 hectoliters and that by the Ming Dynasty it had doubled to over 4,000,000 and there were some 120,000 people working in this business. This enormous labor contingent was backed up by buyers with plenty of money to spend and sellers with a special affection for Tianjin.

In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, there were just two ways of transporting goods and people, namely by water or by land. Water transportation was much more advantageous in terms of capacity, distance and speed. The most attractive factor was its cheapness; sending freight by water cost a

tenth that of land transportation. Tianjin, surrounded by sea and laced with rivers, was specially blessed by nature in terms of water resources, capitalizing on which, the late-starter city was able to catch up and emerge as a place of strategic importance.

Tianjin has been a fully fledged commercial city since the Yuan Dynasty. "The grain ships arrived at Zhigu extremely fast, earthenware jars and fabrics from south of the Yangtze River could be found in every street." At the turn of the Ming and Qing dynasties, Tianjin was prospering, as was described in the preface to *Records on Fort Tianjin* written in the later half of the 17th century: "Tianjin, over 100 km away from the capital, is the communications hub between north and south. Tens of thousands of boats of grain are transported from the south to the capital by way of Tianjin, where vessels meet, merchants gather, and people from everywhere congregate.... Although famous as a fort, it has everything required for a big metropolis." These written words may lack the immediacy of graphic images but they conjure up a bustling scene of shuttling vessels, a bustle that decided Tianjin's status as a commercial metropolis. Only with the thriving of commerce could Tianjin have possessed the prominent institutions of higher-learning, the spirit and culture coming along with its rich waters, a post route to every corner of the world, the solid foundation of industries, the brilliance of Gold Street, the integration of Chinese and Western architectural styles, a communications hub leading to any part of the world, a wealth of legends and stories going on and on....

A city is a multi-faceted thing, each facet reflecting one part of the spectrum. One color alone cannot sum her up. Each color stands out like a bookmark in a book, helping the reader home in right away on a particular chapter or passage.

Tianjin's "four unique things" function as four masts supporting the sails. For 600 years Tianjin has been riding the sea and river winds, braving the waves of history, gradually approaching the utopia of the distant shore. Don't you see? The dancing waters of the bay are the everlasting source of inspiration, setting up the post system equals deeply pioneering spirit, what Gold Street keeps its ear to is the pulse beat of opening-up, and what its many

