

# DEFENSE STRUCTURES

The Great Wall Stretching Over  
the Vast Land

Qiao Yun

The Excellence of Ancient  
Chinese Architecture

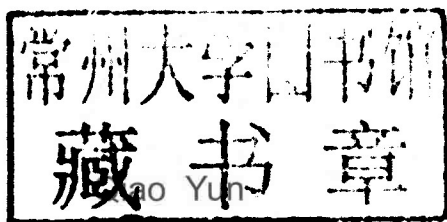


China Architecture & Building Press

The Excellence of Ancient Chinese Architecture

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## **The Excellence of Ancient Chinese Architecture**

### **Defense Structures** 城防结构 **The Great Wall Stretching Over the Vast Land**

**Qiao Yun**

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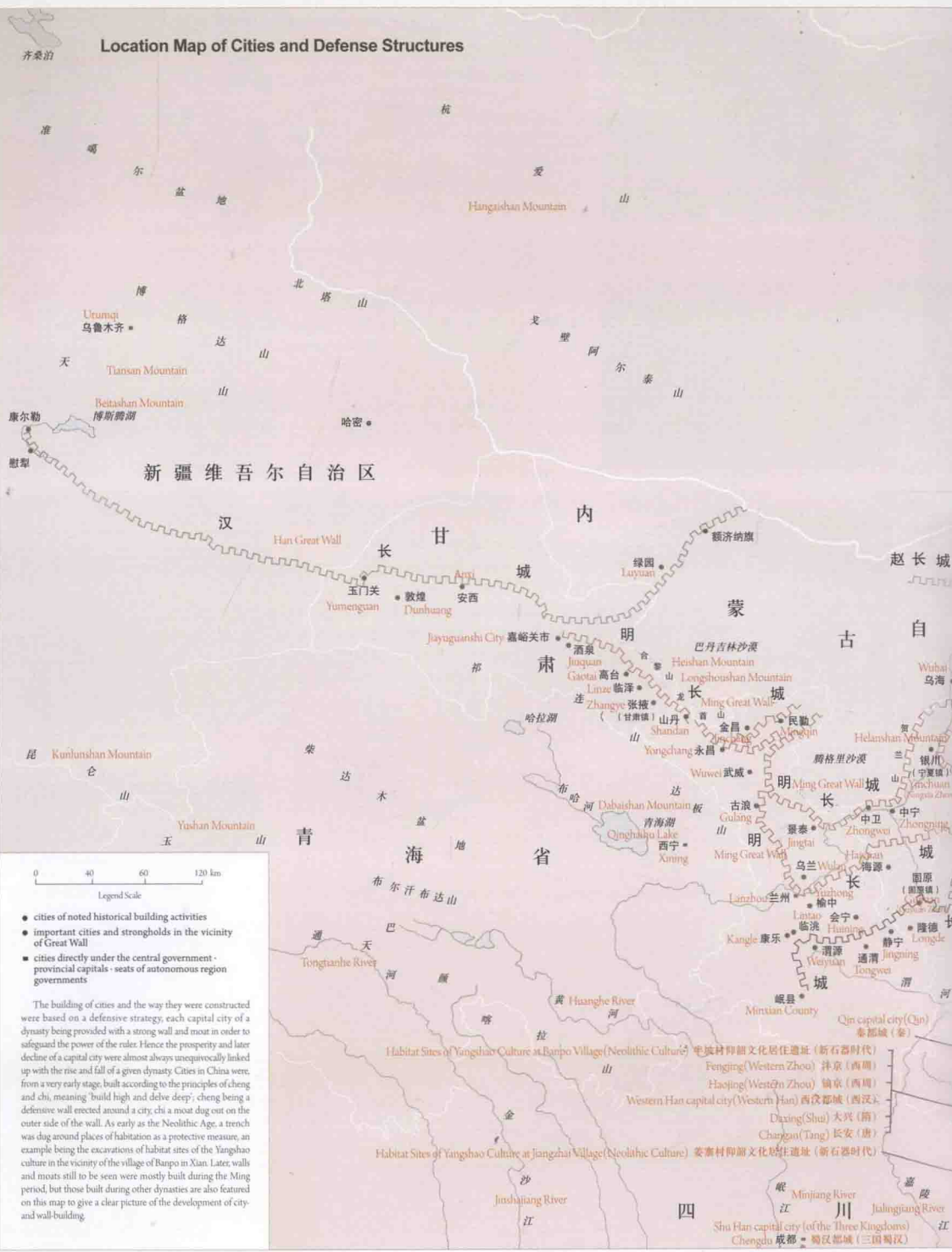
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# Location Map of Cities and Defense Structures



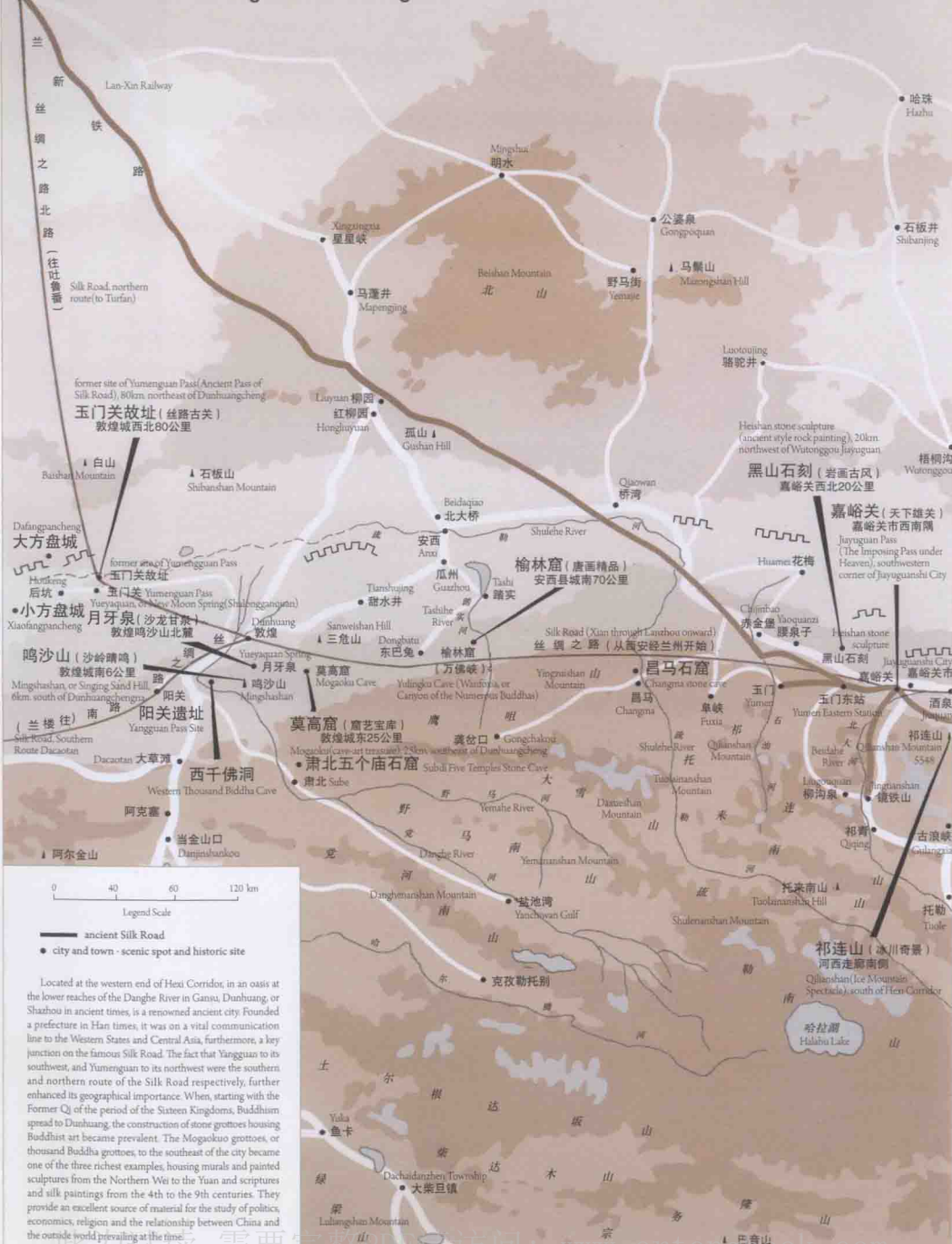
The building of cities and the way they were constructed were based on a defensive strategy: each capital city of a dynasty being provided with a strong wall and moat in order to safeguard the power of the ruler. Hence the prosperity and later decline of a capital city were almost always unequivocally linked up with the rise and fall of a given dynasty. Cities in China were, from a very early stage, built according to the principles of cheng and chi, meaning 'build high and delve deep'; cheng being a defensive wall erected around a city, chi a moat dug out on the outer side of the wall. As early as the Neolithic Age, a trench was dug around places of habitation as a protective measure, an example being the excavations of habitation sites of the Yangshao culture in the vicinity of the village of Banpo in Xian. Later, walls and moats still to be seen were mostly built during the Ming period, but those built during other dynasties are also featured on this map to give a clear picture of the development of city-and-wall-building.

Habitat Sites of Yangshao Culture at Banpo Village (Neolithic Culture) 半坡村仰韶文化居住遗址 (新石器时代)  
 Fengting (Western Zhou) 凤鸣 (西周)  
 Haojing (Western Zhou) 镐京 (西周)  
 Western Han capital city (Western Han) 西汉都城 (西汉)  
 Daxing (Shu) 大兴 (隋)  
 Chang'an (Tang) 长安 (唐)  
 Habitat Sites of Yangshao Culture at Jiangzhai Village (Neolithic Culture) 姜寨村仰韶文化居住遗址 (新石器时代)

Shu Han capital city (of the Three Kingdoms) 蜀汉都城 (三国蜀汉)  
 Chengdu 成都



# Guide to Dunhuang and Surrounding Area



Located at the western end of Hexi Corridor, in an oasis at the lower reaches of the Danghe River in Gansu, Dunhuang, or Shazhou in Han times, is a renowned ancient city. Founded a prefecture in Han times, it was on a vital communication line to the Western States and Central Asia, furthermore, a key junction on the famous Silk Road. The fact that Yanguan to its southwest, and Yumenqian to its northwest were the southern and northern route of the Silk Road respectively, further enhanced its geographical importance. When, starting with the Former Qi of the period of the Sixteen Kingdoms, Buddhism spread to Dunhuang, the construction of stone grottoes housing Buddhist art became prevalent. The Mogao grottoes, or thousand Buddha grottoes, to the southeast of the city became one of the three richest examples, housing murals and painted sculptures from the Northern Wei to the Yuan and scriptures and silk paintings from the 4th to the 9th centuries. They provide an excellent source of material for the study of politics, economics, religion and the relationship between China and the outside world prevailing at the time.

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## Editor's Note

- The series consists of ten volumes, each of which deals with respectively palace architecture, imperial mausoleums, imperial gardens, private gardens, vernacular dwellings, Buddhist buildings, Taoist buildings, Islamic buildings, ritual and ceremonious buildings and defense structures.
- Each volume is basically composed of four sections, i.e. general introduction, colour photographs, glossary and chronology of major events.
- The general introduction describes the background, development process, architectural characteristics of different types of buildings and is complimented with photographs and drawings.
- The colour photographs are arranged in the order of building distribution area or the time when the building was completed. The series contains about 1,700 exquisite colour photographs, which are attached with captions explaining the location, construction time, and artistic and technical features.
- Each volume is accompanied with layout plan, drawing of recovered buildings, distribution map and travel guide to mark the location of famous buildings and cultural attractions in the vicinity.
- The glossary is arrayed according to the sequence of strokes of Chinese characters, which is a reference for general readers.
- Chronology of major events is affiliated with each volume of the series. Chinese traditional chronology is adopted in the annals of the series, and is also indicated in the Christian era for easy reference.

## Preface 1

China enjoys a long and profound history of ancient architecture. Her verifiable artifacts could be dated back to 7,000 years ago from Hemudu ruins in Yuyao to Banpo ruins in Xi'an. Of course, architecture underwent a long process from primitiveness to sophistication before the Warring States, while in the Qin and Han dynasties, it gained an apparent progress along with the development of production and unification of the country. Moreover, in over a thousand years of the prosperous Tang Dynasty to the Ming and Qing dynasties, it reached several unprecedented peaks which were embodied by diversified building forms and refined planning and exquisite construction.

The love of architecture is the love of history and culture. China Architecture & Building Press (CABP), from the very beginning of its founding, has defined the sorting out and publication of traditional Chinese architecture and the enhancement of Chinese culture as one of important themes in its mission. In 1950s and 1960s, many monographs on the subject by experts such as Liang Sicheng, Liu Dunzhen, Tong Jun, Liu Zhiping and others were published. In early 1980s when China was just opened to the outside world, CABP set aside a special fund for publication of academic books on ancient Chinese architecture despite of the limited financial capability then. As a result, large academic albums of *Ancient Chinese Architecture*, *Ancient Architecture in Chengde*, *the Art of Chinese Gardens*, *the Buildings of Confucius Temple in Qufu*, *Ancient Buildings of Putuoshan*, *Summer Palace as well as five volumes of History of Ancient Chinese Architecture* were put forth continuously. Those books have proved to be of high academic and practical values in consolidation, conservation and protection of the national treasure.

*The Excellence of Ancient Chinese Architecture* in English is a series of ten volumes on various aspects of the ancient Chinese architecture, which offer a comprehensive coverage of the art, highlighted by the supreme quality of the photos as well as plenty of drawings of plans, sections and perspectives. The easy description would lead to a comprehension of the cultural essence of Chinese architecture, and appreciation of the aesthetics and philosophy embodied by the art. The authors are famous Chinese experts who have long been engaged in the study of the related subjects, whose dedication makes the series authoritative and informative for interested laymen and specialists alike. Now the Excellence of Ancient Chinese Architecture is published. It is a happy event. I believe that it will serve as a door for all those who are interested in the study of ancient Chinese architecture.

**Zhou Yi**

Former President  
China Architecture & Building Press

Former Chairman, Committee on Publication  
of Science Books  
Vice Chairman, Chinese Association of Publishers