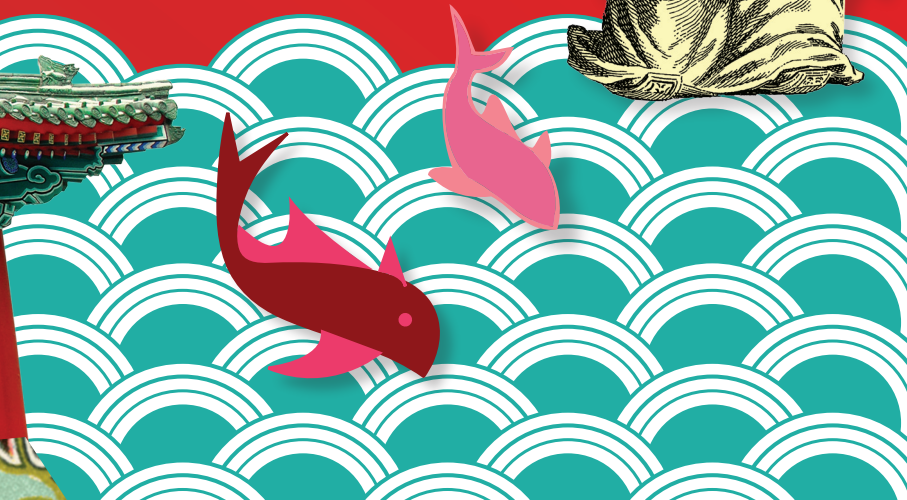
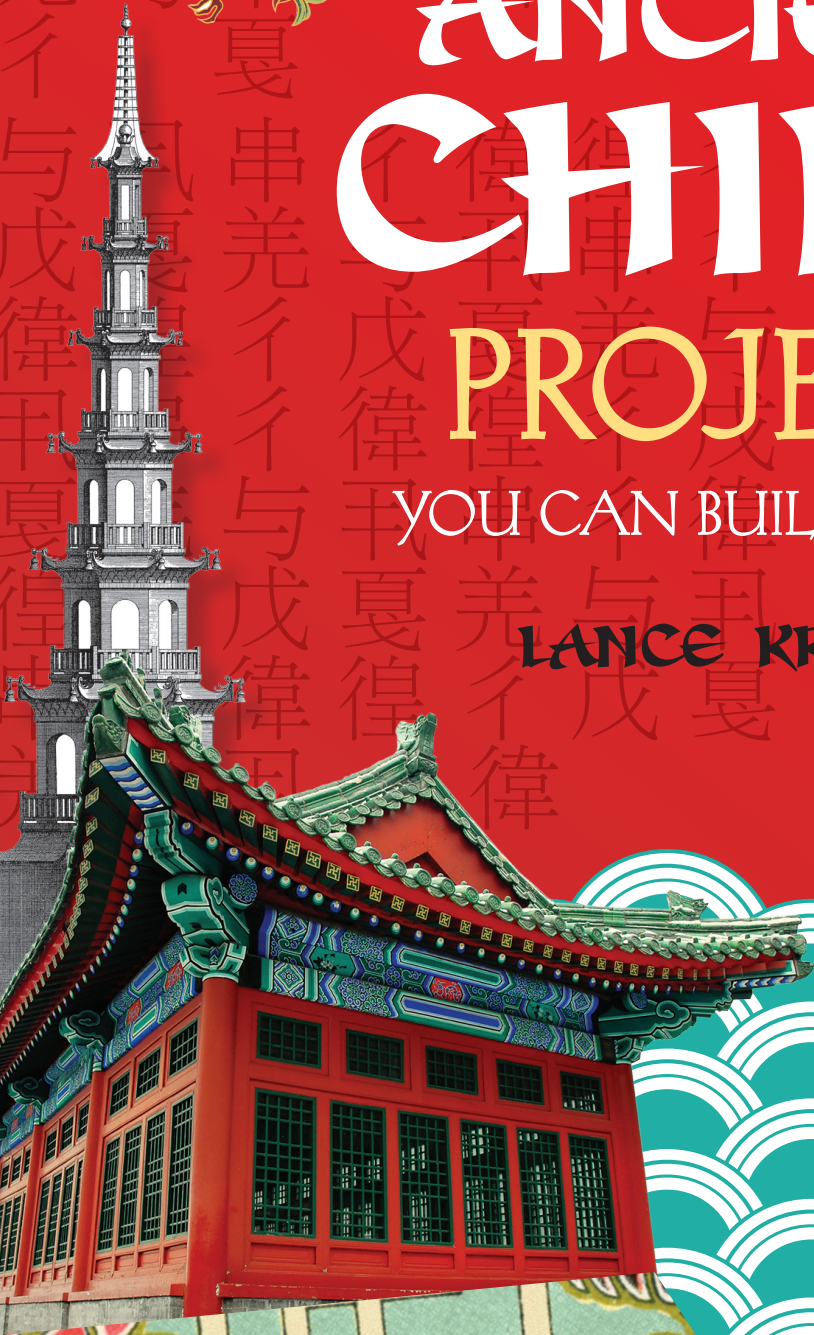




GREAT ANCIENT CHINA PROJECTS

YOU CAN BUILD YOURSELF

LANCE KRAMER





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Nomad Press made this paper choice because our printer, Sheriden, is a member of Green Press Initiative, a non-profit program dedicated to supporting authors, publishers, and suppliers in their efforts to reduce their use of fiber obtained from endangered forests.

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Nomad Press

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TIMELINE

Most historians break China's history up into the following dynasties, or periods of time, when a family or group of people ruled over China. BCE after a date stands for Before Common Era and counts down to zero. CE stands for Common Era and counts up from zero. These are non-religious terms corresponding to BC and AD.

中國古代 ANCIENT CHINA

SHANG DYNASTY - 1600 TO 1046 BCE

- ☐ The emergence of the earliest formal Chinese state. Writing is established and a military developed. Shang settlements are constantly at war with neighboring peoples and villages.
- ☐ Archaeologists have discovered wheels in China dating back to at least 1500 BCE.

WESTERN ZHOU DYNASTY - 1046 TO 771 BCE

- ☐ The Zhou kings conquer the Shang state in the middle of the eleventh century BCE.

EASTERN ZHOU DYNASTY - 770 TO 256 BCE

- ☐ Small sections of fortified walls are built by various feudal states.
- ☐ Once armies adopt the idea of a cavalry from the nomads, military strength grows to over 100,000 men.

SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD - 770 TO 476 BCE

- ☐ Confucius, one of the most important thinkers in Chinese history, lives from 551 to 479 BCE. His teachings influence much of Chinese education and many beliefs and customs even today.
- ☐ In the sixth century BCE, Sun Tzu writes the famous war philosophy text, *The Art of War*.
- ☐ Kites are invented in China during the fifth century BCE.
- ☐ The Chinese invent the farming hoe between the fifth and sixth centuries BCE.

WARRING STATES PERIOD - 475 TO 221 BCE

- ☐ Bronze coins from ancient China date back to the fifth century BCE.
- ☐ Relief maps are used for records and navigation as early as the third century BCE.



TIMELINE

QIN DYNASTY - 221 TO 207 BCE

- ☐ Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi, or the “First Emperor,” takes power in 221 BCE. He begins to join together existing city walls and construct the Great Wall along the empire’s northern borders.
- ☐ The emperor unifies Chinese script and tears down walls between states.
- ☐ The Terracotta Army is buried with Emperor Shi Huangdi between 210 and 209 BCE.

WESTERN HAN DYNASTY - 206 BCE TO 23 CE

- ☐ The Han Dynasty expands the roles of the emperor and creates a permanent army.
- ☐ Ts’ai Lun, an official in the imperial court, is believed to invent paper in 105 BCE.
- ☐ By 200 BCE, the crossbow is a common weapon used by Chinese soldiers.
- ☐ The Han Dynasty is the first to standardize weights and measurements.
- ☐ The Chinese astronomer Keng Shou-Ch’ang invents the first armillary sphere in 52 BCE to help measure the stars and planets.

EASTERN HAN DYNASTY - 25 TO 220 CE

- ☐ By the end of the second century CE, China already has more than 22,000 miles of roads.
- ☐ The wheelbarrow is first used in China in the first century CE.
- ☐ The first Chinese junk, or sailboat, is developed around 200 CE.
- ☐ In 132 CE, scientist, inventor, mathematician, and royal astronomer Chang Heng invents the first seismograph to predict earthquakes.

THE THREE KINGDOMS - 220 TO 265 CE

- ☐ After the Han Dynasty collapses, three rival kingdoms take control and create great unrest.

THE PERIOD OF DISUNION - 265 TO 618 CE

- ☐ Around 600 CE, the city of Xi’an has more than one million people living inside its walls, making it the largest city in the world.
- ☐ Around 350 CE, farmers begin to cultivate tea.





TIMELINE

THE TANG DYNASTY - 618 TO 907 CE

- ☐ The first experiments with fireworks take place in 850 CE.
- ☐ During the seventh century, the Chinese begin construction of the Grand Canal, the largest ancient canal in the world.

THE FIVE DYNASTIES - 907 TO 960 CE

- ☐ The Chinese invent gate locks, making travel along canals much easier and more efficient.

NORTHERN SONG DYNASTY - 960 TO 1126 CE

- ☐ In 1041 CE, a man named Bi Sheng makes the first moveable type apparatus.
- ☐ By the eleventh century, Chinese coins are used as a common currency throughout Asia.
- ☐ In 1040 CE, the first magnetic compass is invented.
- ☐ Su Song invents his famous mechanical clock in 1092 CE.
- ☐ Changes in government policy and advances in printing technology lead to better education, literacy, and access to books.

SOUTHERN SONG DYNASTY - 1127 TO 1279 CE

- ☐ The naval technology of the Song Dynasty helps defend the empire from foreign invasions, especially the Mongols, for a century.

YUAN (MONGOL) DYNASTY - 1279 TO 1368 CE

- ☐ After many bloody and violent battles, Mongolians take control of China and divide the country, often based on ethnicity.
- ☐ Beijing becomes the new capital of China when Khubilai Khan, the first Mongol emperor, builds his imperial city there.

MING DYNASTY - 1368 TO 1644 CE

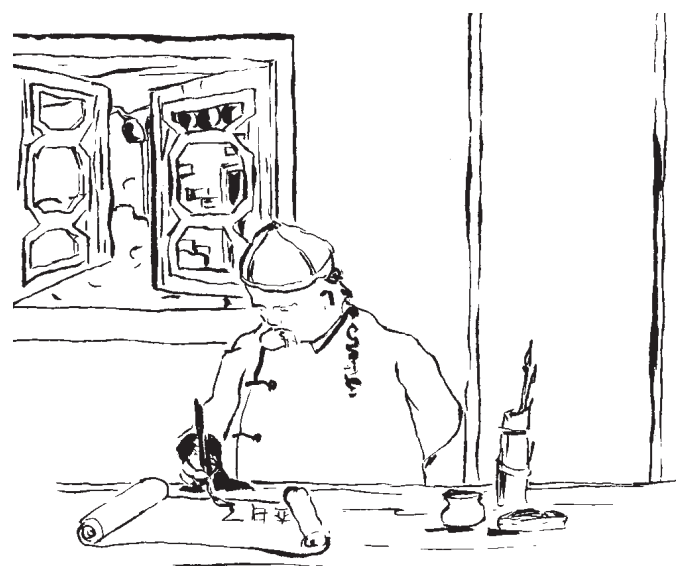
- ☐ Most construction of the Great Wall takes place between 1368 and 1644 CE.
- ☐ The Forbidden City is built in Beijing between 1406 and 1420 CE and serves as the imperial palace until 1912 CE.
- ☐ The great Chinese explorer Zheng He is born in 1371 CE. Zheng travels to Asia, India, the Persian Gulf, Arabia, Africa, and the Americas with a fleet of ships and crews of more than 20,000 men.





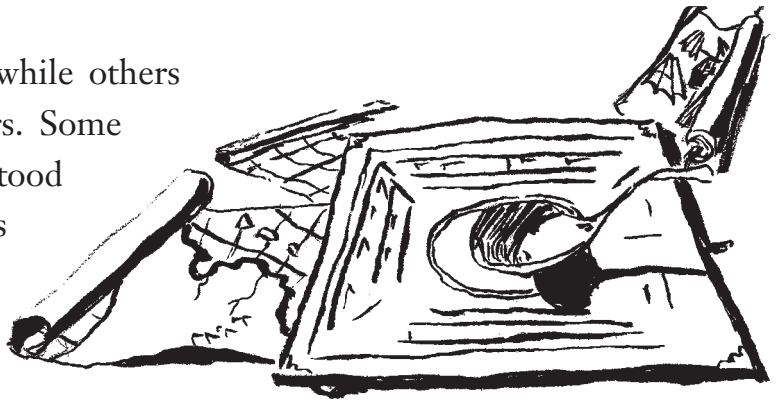
INTRODUCTION

In today's world, teachers in the United States and Europe usually teach only one subject. Your science teacher might only teach science. Or your history teacher might only teach history. But in ancient China, the best scholars, or wise people, had more than one specialty. It was not enough to be an expert in history or science. A wise person also had to be able to paint, to write in **calligraphy**, and maybe even play a musical instrument.



GREAT ANCIENT CHINA PROJECTS

Some scholars wrote poetry while others trained to become expert archers. Some were even warriors who understood military tactics. And there was also a good chance they knew about farming techniques. It sure took a lot to rise to the top of ancient Chinese society and get some respect!



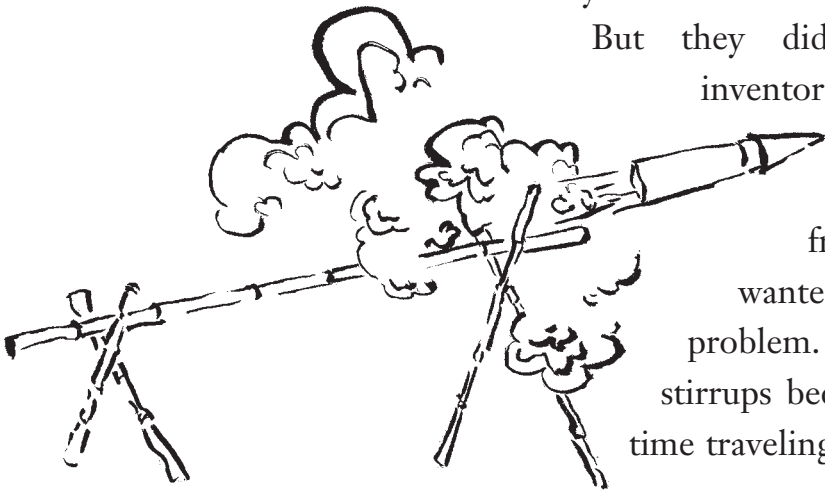
Chinese compass from 200 BCE

This book will show you how to become a modern “wise person.” You’ll explore the many different parts of ancient China. You’ll learn about each of the major dynasties throughout its history. You’ll find out what it was like to be the ruler of the whole Chinese Empire. And you’ll learn about important Chinese thinkers, such as **Confucius**. Even more than 1,000 years after his death, Chinese people today still follow his ideas. You’ll discover how people made things like bronze casts and porcelain pottery. Finally, you’ll read the amazing stories behind some of ancient China’s most important inventions, such as paper, moveable type, the magnetic compass, gunpowder, and even the world’s first kite.

Many of these inventions changed the world.

But they did not come from famous inventors, such as Thomas Edison or Leonardo da Vinci.

Usually, inventions came from ordinary people who wanted to solve an everyday problem. For example, **nomads** invented stirrups because they spent most of their time traveling on horseback. They were just



looking for a way to make riding a horse easier! A printer invented moveable type because he wanted a way to make his job go more quickly.

Throughout this book, you will have the chance to build your own version of lots of these inventions. For most projects, you won't even have to go to the store to buy materials. Instead, you will be able to use things you can find right in your home. You'll learn to appreciate the amazing creativity of ancient Chinese thinkers. You'll discover many things about different parts of Chinese history and culture. And, best of all, you'll have your own working models of some of the most famous Chinese inventions. These inventions may even inspire you to think of ideas that can improve things in your own life and the world around you.

游牧人

NOMADS

WORDS TO KNOW

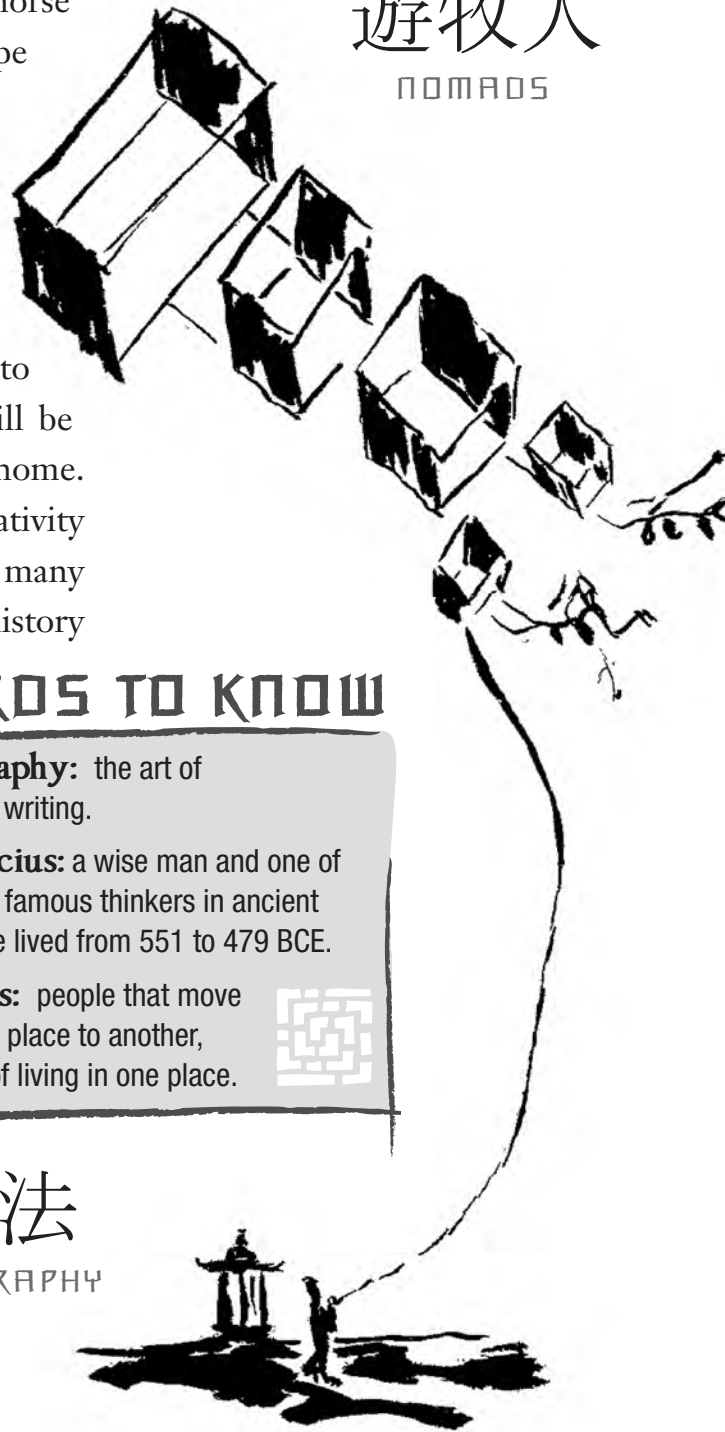
calligraphy: the art of beautiful writing.

Confucius: a wise man and one of the most famous thinkers in ancient China. He lived from 551 to 479 BCE.

nomads: people that move from one place to another, instead of living in one place.

書法

CALLIGRAPHY





A CIVILIZATION LIKE NONE OTHER

About 1.3 billion people live in China, out of the 6.7 billion people alive in the world today. Think about it. This means that almost one out of every five people in the world live in China. China is about the same size as the United States, but there are more than four times as many people living there!

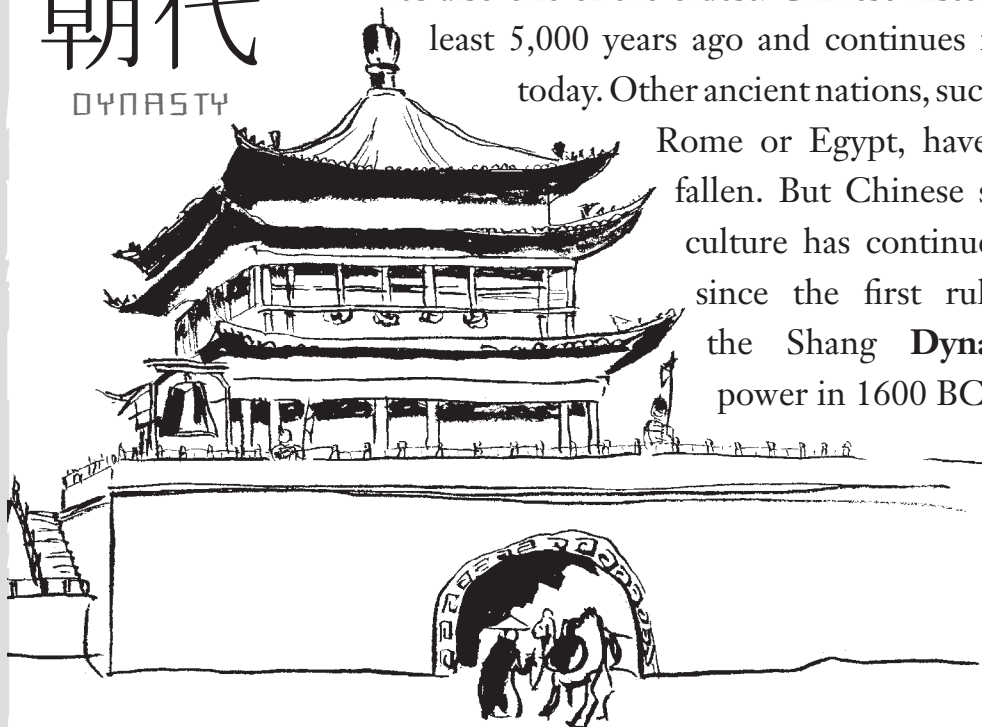
China is one of the largest and most important countries in the world.

朝代

DYNASTY

It's also one of the oldest. Chinese history began at least 5,000 years ago and continues right up to today. Other ancient nations, such as ancient

Rome or Egypt, have risen and fallen. But Chinese society and culture has continued to grow since the first rulers, called the Shang **Dynasty**, took power in 1600 BCE.

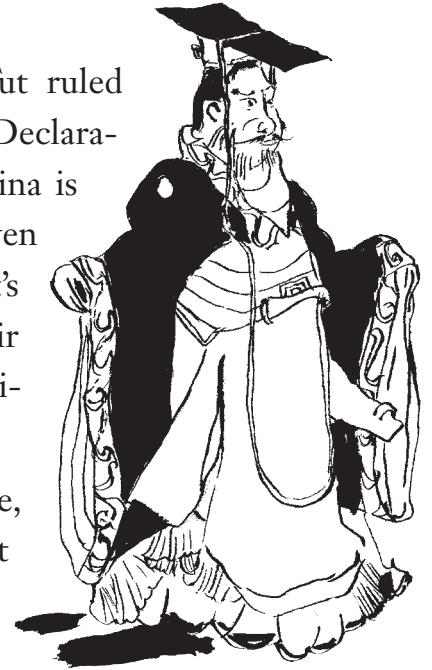


天命

MANDATE
OF HEAVEN

This was almost 200 years before King Tut ruled Egypt, and over 3,000 years before America's Declaration of Independence was signed. Today, China is home to many different people, cultures, religions, and even languages. It is experiencing many different changes. But it's amazing how so many Chinese people still look back to their ancient history. They take great pride in their ancient traditions, which still remain important in daily life.

Ancient China was a fascinating place in which to live, with a reputation as one of the most advanced and important places in the known world. In 1000 BCE, the Zhou kings called China "The Middle Kingdom" because they believed China was the center of the world! They also thought that China was the middle point between humans on earth and the gods in the heavens. Therefore, the Chinese believed that the emperor had a direct connection to the gods, called a **Mandate of Heaven**. This special relationship helped him to gain the trust and respect of his people.



WORDS TO KNOW

dynasty: a powerful family or group that rules for many years. Some ancient Chinese dynasties continued for several hundred years and some were very short.

Mandate of Heaven: the idea that China's emperor got his power straight from heaven. That meant people trusted him to rule over their lives.

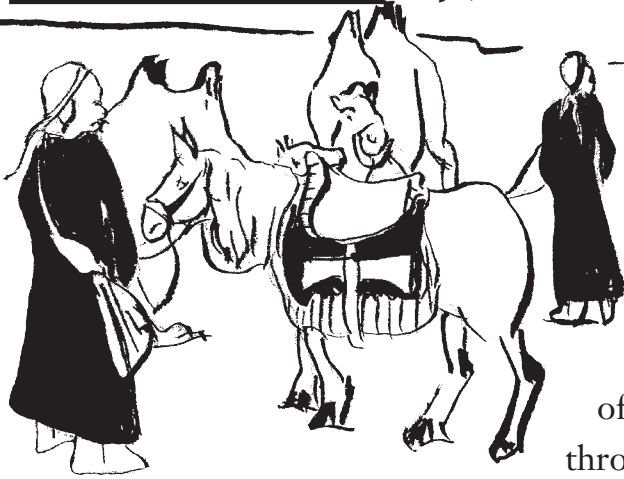
monastery: a place where monks devoted their lives to prayer and religious study.



China has always been, and still is, mostly a rural country. This means that most Chinese people live and work in the countryside on farms. But ancient China was also home to some of the largest and most advanced cities on earth. For example, in the seventh century (600 CE), the city of Xi'an had more than one million people living inside its walls. At the time, it was the largest city in the world.

China's cities brought together some of the world's most brilliant thinkers. They had lots of new ideas about art, science, writing,





and government. Chinese architects designed many wonders of the world. These include the Great Wall of China, a magnificent army of lifesize clay warriors, and the huge Imperial City in Beijing, with over 900 separate buildings inside its walls. They also built hundreds of beautiful temples and **monasteries** throughout the country.

寺院

MONASTERY

Ancient China didn't have telephones, airplanes, or the Internet. But the Chinese found many ways to stay closely connected with other people. The Silk Road brought together merchants and travelers from many parts of the world. This road started as a way for merchants to sell goods. In addition to carrying pottery, jade, silk, and tea, merchants also carried new information about mathematics, astronomy, and religion. People were able to exchange ideas, inventions, and stories about new places. The Silk Road helped thousands of people communicate and understand the world.



For about 2,500 years, many people considered the area known as the North China Plain to be the center of China. This is where the Shang Dynasty came into being between 1600 and 1045 BCE. A thousand years later, China's realm extended from the area of Sichuan in the southwestern part of the country all the way to the South China Sea. To the north, the kingdom's dominion ran all the way to the central Asian grasslands. To the west, China's borders included the Himalaya Mountains. And to the south, they covered the high Tibetan Plateau. In the far north, just below Mongolia, is the vast and arid Gobi Desert. In the far south, the area around the Pearl River is home to a

