

UNIT 2

World History

Lately you cannot pick up the newspaper or watch the nightly news without hearing about disasters in other countries. They may be hurricanes in the Caribbean or downturns in Asian markets. Or a terrorist group makes a life-threatening attack in a city halfway across the world. Do these events really affect your life? Such events can have a strong impact on Americans.

More than ever before, Americans should know about other countries. Knowing about a nation's natural resources and its type of government are just a start. Instant information and transportation technology make us neighbors with all nations and peoples. Because Americans are such a mix of many cultures, we can benefit from learning how people in other countries handle conflicts and manage to cooperate.

- What international stories appear on television news shows?
- What has caused conflict among countries throughout history? Why have countries depended on one another throughout history?

SECTIONS

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| 6 A Time of Enlightenment | 9 Global Interdependence |
| 7 The Rise of Nations | |

SECTION 5

The Age of Empires

Setting the Stage

Long ago, China was made up of many kingdoms. The ruler of Qin (pronounced Chin), one of the largest kingdoms, set out to conquer his neighbors. By 221 B.C. he united all of China's kingdoms and took the name of Qin Shi Huangdi, which means the "First Emperor of China." People who lived north of China invaded Shi Huangdi's newly conquered lands because they thought these kingdoms were without leaders. In response, Shi Huangdi sent his leading general and 300,000 troops to drive out the invaders. Shi Huangdi also ordered his army to build a wall to keep out enemies. This was the beginning of the Great Wall of China.

PREVIEW THE ARTICLE

Begin to think about what you will read. Look at the title of the article, the headings (subtitles) within the article, the title of the map, and the caption with the picture. What will you learn about the history of China from the article?

RELATE TO THE TOPIC

This article is about the Great Wall of China. It describes the wall's development during different periods in Chinese history. Imagine Shi Huangdi as the head of a large company. Why do you think emperors and business leaders prefer large kingdoms and companies to smaller ones?

VOCABULARY

empire

peasants

civilization

dynasty

barbarian

The Great Wall of China

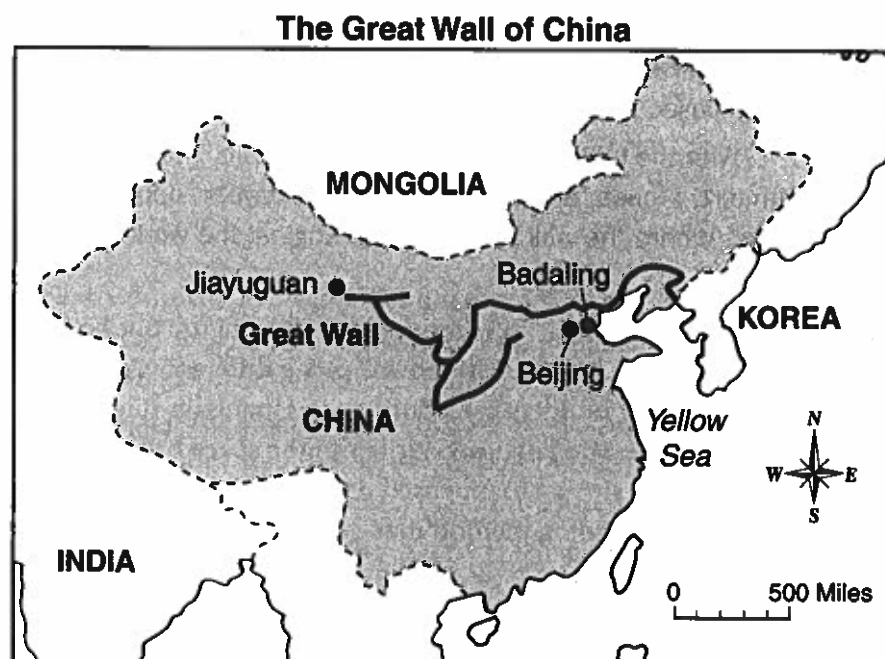
The Great Wall of China runs from the western city of Jiayuguan to the Yellow Sea. Between these points, the wall zigzags across 2,150 miles. It is so long that astronauts can make radar images of the wall from space. Building this marvel took 1,800 years and millions of laborers.

Beginning the Great Wall

As early as 500 B.C., local Chinese rulers had walls erected to mark their borders and to keep out invaders. This piecemeal wall building went on for about 300 years. Then Shi Huangdi established his empire. An **empire** is a group of countries or territories governed by one ruler. These early Chinese kingdoms were independent states. But their people shared similar ways and values, such as love for learning. In other words, they had a common **civilization**.

Huns and other groups who wandered Mongolia—the land north of China—followed a different way of life. They valued strength in battle and skill with horses. The Chinese considered them barbarians. A **barbarian** is someone whom others regard as inferior and ignorant.

Shi Huangdi decided to keep barbarians out of China and to mark his empire's northern border with a great wall. He had his army and half a million **peasants**—poor, uneducated farmers—create this wall from the many earlier walls. Most of the early walls were crude structures, so the workers rebuilt them as well as building the connecting sections. The wall followed the land. It snaked along rivers rather than across them and up hills rather than around them. By the end of Shi Huangdi's fifteen-year rule, about 1,200 miles of wall had been completed.



Source: Hawkes, Nigel, *Structures: The Way Things Are Built*, Macmillan. New York, 1993, p. 128.

Shi Huangdi's workers put up a closed, wooden framework along the planned route of the wall. Then they packed the space inside the frame with three to four inches of dirt. They pounded each layer of dirt before adding the next layer. Eventually the wall rose more than twenty feet.

Shi Huangdi's wall was only the beginning. In A.D. 446 another emperor drafted 300,000 people to work on the wall. About one hundred years later, another emperor forced 1.8 million peasants to continue building the wall. The last work on the Great Wall for several centuries was finished by A.D. 618 under the Sui dynasty. A **dynasty** is a ruling family whose members govern over a long time.

Mongol Rule in China

After the Sui dynasty, the Tang and the next dynasties built up the army rather than the Great Wall. Meanwhile, the tribes of Mongolia united under Genghis Khan and conquered lands from Korea to Russia and into India. In 1279 Mongols led by Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis, crossed the crumbling wall. They defeated the Chinese army and added China to their empire.

Kublai Khan established the Yuan dynasty, which ruled China for about one hundred years. The Mongols put themselves and foreigners, such as Italian Marco Polo, into high positions. The Chinese resented the way their Mongol rulers tolerated people who did not follow age-old Chinese beliefs.

In the mid 1300s, famine and flooding in China sparked uprisings. A peasant leader and his followers drove the Mongols out and founded the Ming dynasty. To keep the Mongols out, Ming rulers chose to rebuild the wall rather than the army.

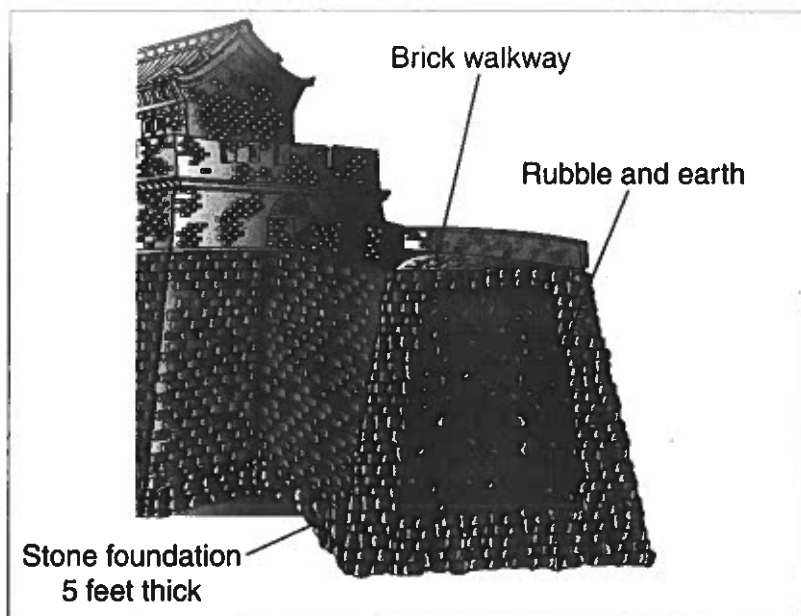
Revisiting the Ming Dynasty

Much of the Great Wall that remains today dates back to the Ming dynasty. To build new sections of wall, workers laid foundations of stone. Other workers set up ovens called kilns to make bricks and tiles and to burn lime for mortar.

With the bricks, workers built facing walls. They filled the space between the walls with dirt, stones, and rubble. Finally bricklayers topped the sections of wall with brick walks. Where the wall rose at steep angles, the workers laid steps.

Comparing and Contrasting To **compare** ideas is to figure out how they are alike. To **contrast** ideas is to figure out how they are different. Compare and contrast the method that builders used during Shi Huangdi's rule with the one that builders used during the Ming dynasty. Write *s* in the space before the Ming building method that is similar to one used during the Sui dynasty. Write *d* in the space before the Ming building method that differed from those used during the Qin dynasty.

- _____ a. They filled the space between the walls with dirt.
- _____ b. Workers topped the sections of wall with brick walks.



Cross-section of the Great Wall built during the Ming dynasty
Source: Hawkes, Nigel, *Structures: The Way Things Are Built*, Macmillan; New York, 1993, p. 131.

The wall served as a pathway as well as a barrier. Every 200 yards the builders erected a stairway on the Chinese side of the wall. Soldiers climbed the stairway to the top of the wall, where they could march ten abreast. In this way, they could rush to any part of the wall under attack.

The builders also included about 25,000 watchtowers in the wall. Each tower housed thirty to fifty soldiers. In peacetime, the soldiers kept the wall repaired and oversaw the traders who entered through the wall's gates. During wartime, the soldiers drove off invaders with cannons atop the towers.

The Great Wall proved a good defense for almost three hundred

years. But in 1644, a Chinese traitor opened a gate in the wall to let in Manchu warriors. They were wanderers like the Mongols and came from the land northeast of China. The Manchus defeated the Ming army and set up the Qing (ching) dynasty, which ruled China until 1911.

The best-preserved part of the Great Wall is probably the Badaling section built during the Ming dynasty. From its top, you can still see the mounds where soldiers built fires for sending smoke signals. These signals warned troops miles away of approaching invaders.

Other sections of the wall have not fared as well as Badaling. The government of China has allowed many parts out of tourists' reach to decay. Even so, historians today consider the Great Wall a wonder of the world. It affirms, for all to see, a people's ingenuity.

Applying an Idea to a New Context Ideas, such as the Great Wall of China, are often presented in one particular situation, or **context**. But the early Chinese were only one people who built a wall along their border. Today immigration officials in the United States have suggested putting up a high fence along the Mexican border. Do you think the United States would be building the fence for the same reasons that the early Chinese built the wall? Circle the letter of each reason they seem to share.

- to keep out foreigners
- to mark the border
- to provide a pathway for troops