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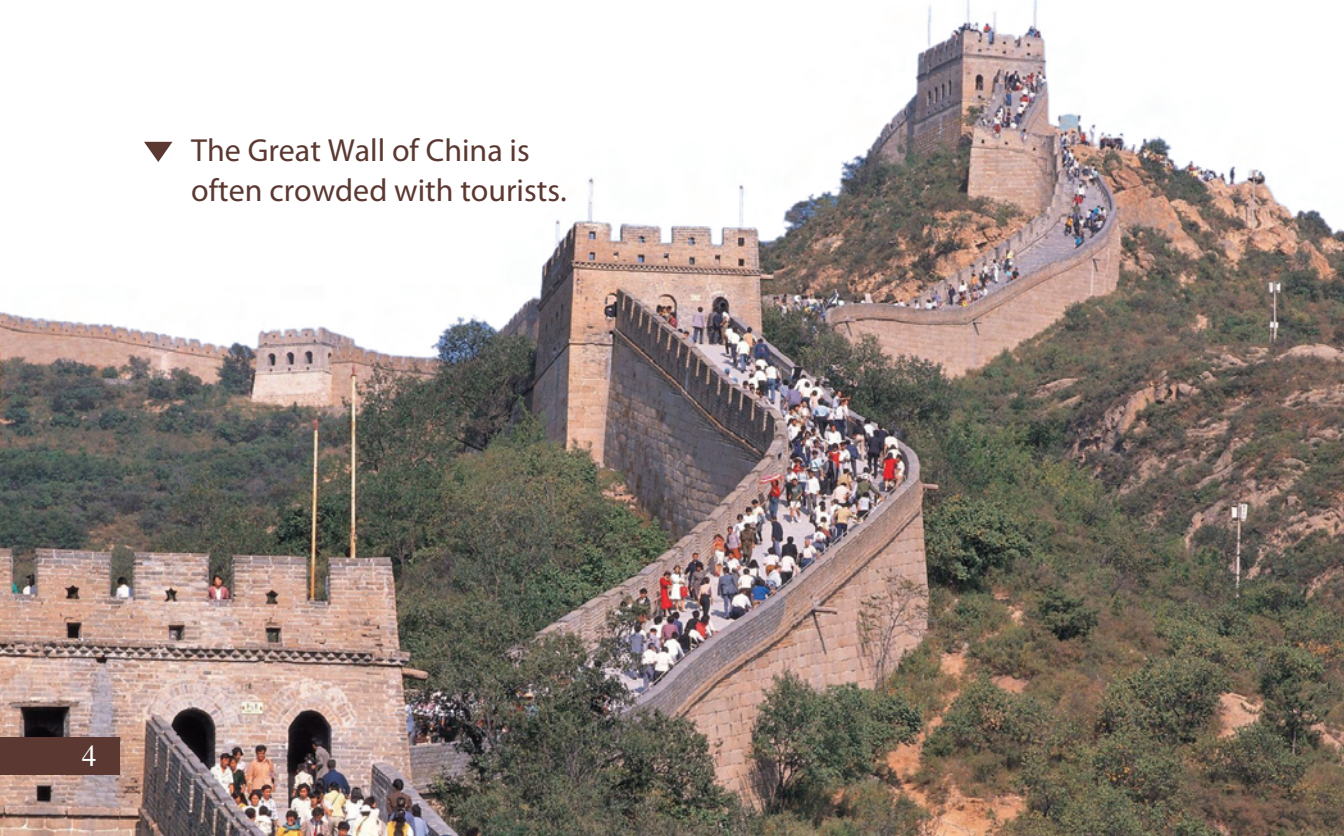
China's Changing History

China is located in Southeast Asia. It borders 14 other countries. Beijing (BAY-jing) is its capital city. China is home to the world's largest human-made structure, the Great Wall of China. It is the fourth largest country in the world. The Himalaya (huh-muh-LAY-uh) Mountains and Yangtze (YANG-see) River are important to China's geography. Today, there are over a billion Chinese people in the world.

At first, kings ruled ancient China. These men fought one another over land and resources. Then, **emperors** ruled China. They ruled in families called **dynasties** (DI-nuhs-teez).

Early in the twentieth century, the dynasty system collapsed. China did not have a stable government. Then, China became a republic. Finally, a **communist** (KAWM-yuh-nist) government was formed.

▼ The Great Wall of China is often crowded with tourists.



▲ China today

▼ The people in China are very diverse.



Incredible Inventions

Civilizations (siv-uh-luh-ZAY-shuhnz) in China have been around for thousands of years. The Chinese made many important contributions. They invented the crossbow, gunpowder, magnetic compass, kite, wheelbarrow, and paper.

Many Different Chinese People

The people in China come from more than 55 different **ethnic** groups.