

# Ancient China

**Chapter 19** Geography and the Early Settlement of China

**Chapter 20** The Shang Dynasty

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**Chapter 22** The First Emperor of China

**Chapter 23** The Han Dynasty

**Chapter 24** The Silk Road



**Areas Controlled by the Four Dynasties of Ancient China**



### Inner and Outer China, About 1700 B.C.E.–220 C.E.



## 19.2 An Overview of China's Geography

Modern China is the third-largest country in the world, after Russia and Canada. It covers about 3.7 million square miles (9.6 million square kilometers). About 1.2 billion people live in China, more than in any other country.

China was much smaller in ancient times. To understand Chinese history, it's helpful to divide China into two main areas: Outer China and Inner China. Most of ancient Chinese history involves only Inner China. The two areas did not become one country until the 1600s C.E.

But the geography of both areas affected the early settlement and history of China.

### The Geography of Outer China

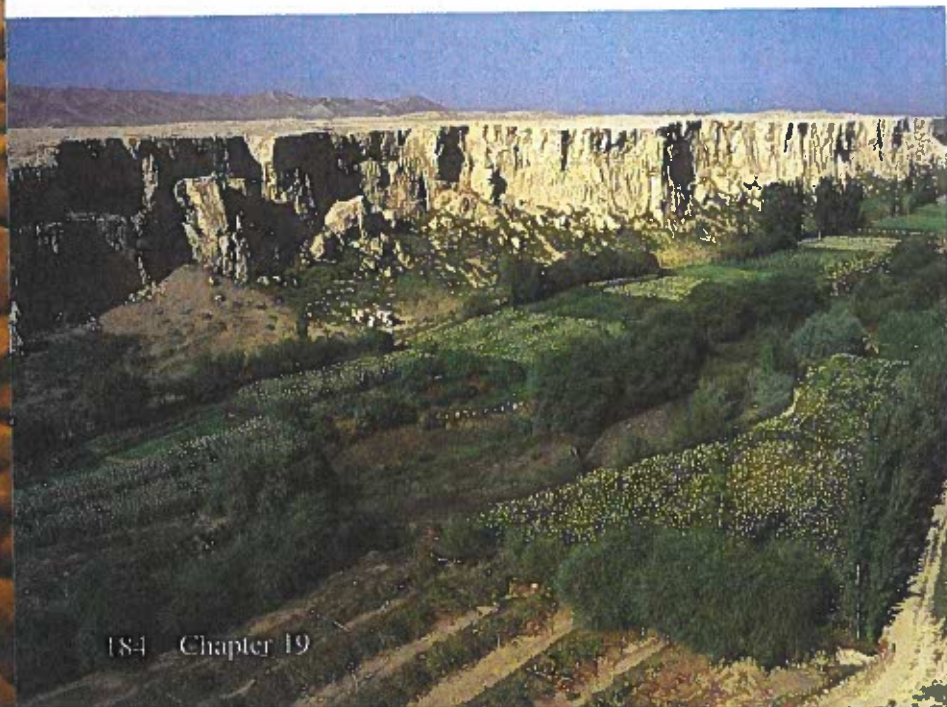
Outer China includes the western and northern parts of present-day China. It is an area of great extremes.

In the southwest, China is bounded by the Himalaya Mountains. The major geographical region in this area is the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau. It is the world's largest plateau. This

region is a bitterly cold place to live. There are only about 50 days a year without frost. Snowstorms are common, even in July.

In the northwest, the major region is the Northwestern Deserts. This area includes the second-lowest place in China. Called the Turfan Depression, it is 505 feet below sea level. It can grow so hot that raindrops evaporate before reaching the ground.

In ancient times, areas near water were the only livable places in the Taklimakan Desert, one of China's Northwestern Deserts.





# Physical Map of Asia





A map of Australia with the Great Barrier Reef highlighted in green. The reef is located off the northeastern coast of Australia. Longitude lines are marked from 60°E to 140°E. The word 'AUSTRALIA' is written vertically on the right side of the map.

