

<<与马可·波罗同行>>

图书基本信息

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内容概要

The story of Marco Polo's journey across the vast land of China has entertained and informed generations of people all over the world since it was first published nearly 700 years ago. Being exploration enthusiasts, we had long indulged in the romantic dream of one day identifying and tracing Marco Polo's route through northern China. Marco Polo chose the most perilous route possible from Venice to China, a country still shrouded in mystery and myth in the Western world. His incredible adventures in Asia and the book he wrote made this Italian merchant world-famous. Upon its publication, *The Travels of Marco Polo* created a furore throughout Europe, and is still widely consulted today.

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章节摘录

版权页：插图： Marco Polo offered a detailed description of Wuwei in his book. He said that cereals were plentiful, and the inhabitants were all Buddhists ("idolaters"). He also wrote that he had seen a kind of large animal, "covered with long hair, except on the back and... white and black in colour. The length of their hair is fully three palms. They are so handsome that they are a wonder to behold." He wrote that it was a hardy species and, after being tamed, could be used as a beast of burden. This animal can only be the yak raised by the Tibetan people in the Qilian Mountains at that time. Later, as we were crossing over Wushaoling Pass in our car, we spotted groups of long-haired yaks on the grassy slopes. Today, as in Marco Polo's time, they are used for ploughing, as beasts of burden, or for riding. A Funeral and a "Red Light District" On the ninth day, as we roamed about Wuwei, we came upon a funeral procession. The coffin was sheltered by a canopy of blue cotton curtains and decorated magnificently with white couplets, colourful wreaths and objects made of paper. Anything the dead might yearn for but could not get in this life, is made for him - albeit of paper - after his death. This age-old Chinese tradition goes back centuries, and was observed by Marco Polo during his travels to this area. What he saw was actually a "marriage" of two dead children, whose parents arranged for the two to be together in the afterlife, also a custom still practiced today in certain regions. He described the funeral-marriage in great detail writing, "They draw pictures on paper of men in the guise of slaves, and of horses, clothes, coins, and furniture, and then burn them ; and they declare that all these become the possessions of their children in the next world...."

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