

The Great Walk

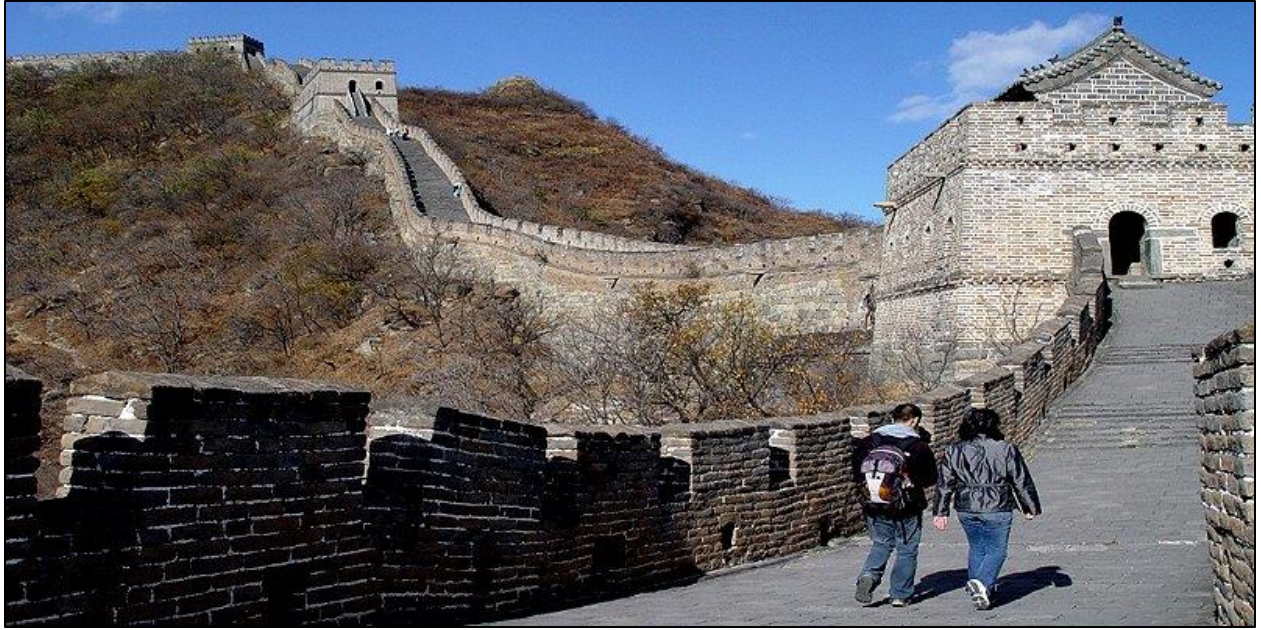
Mutianyu Great Wall, Beijing, China

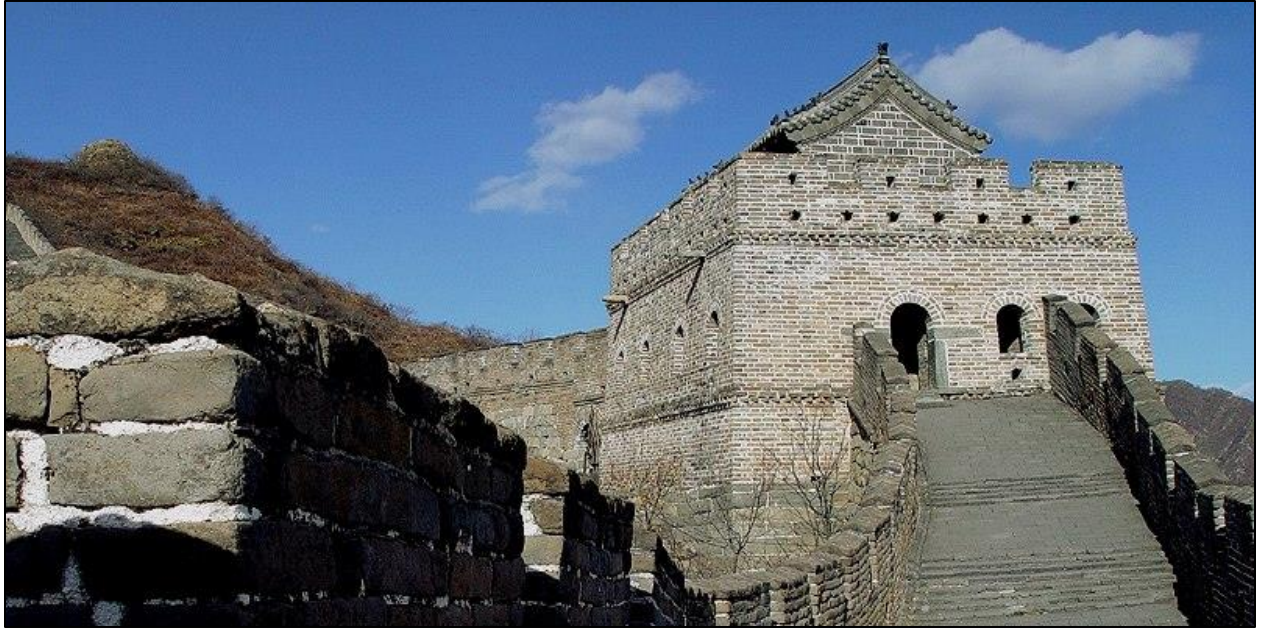
Tom R. Chambers documented the Mutianyu section of The Great Wall of China in 2005.

It is located in Huairou District within the city limits of Beijing, 43 mi northeast of the center of the city. This section is connected with Jiankou in the west and Lianhuachi in the east. As one of the best-preserved parts of the Great Wall, the Mutianyu section used to serve as the northern barrier defending the capital and the imperial tombs.

There were so few visitors at the Wall the day Chambers walked it, he felt the structure belonged to him. As he walked along its surface, he could imagine Chinese soldiers doing the same hundreds of years before. He looked out and over its expanse just as the soldiers probably did keeping an eye out for invaders.





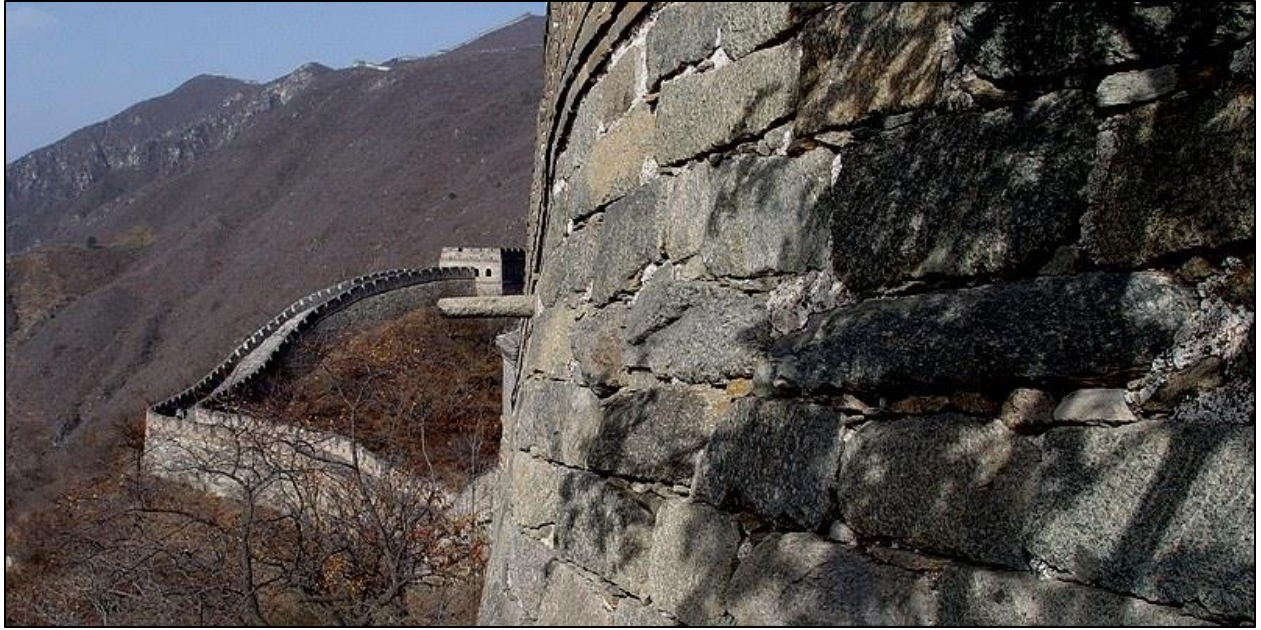


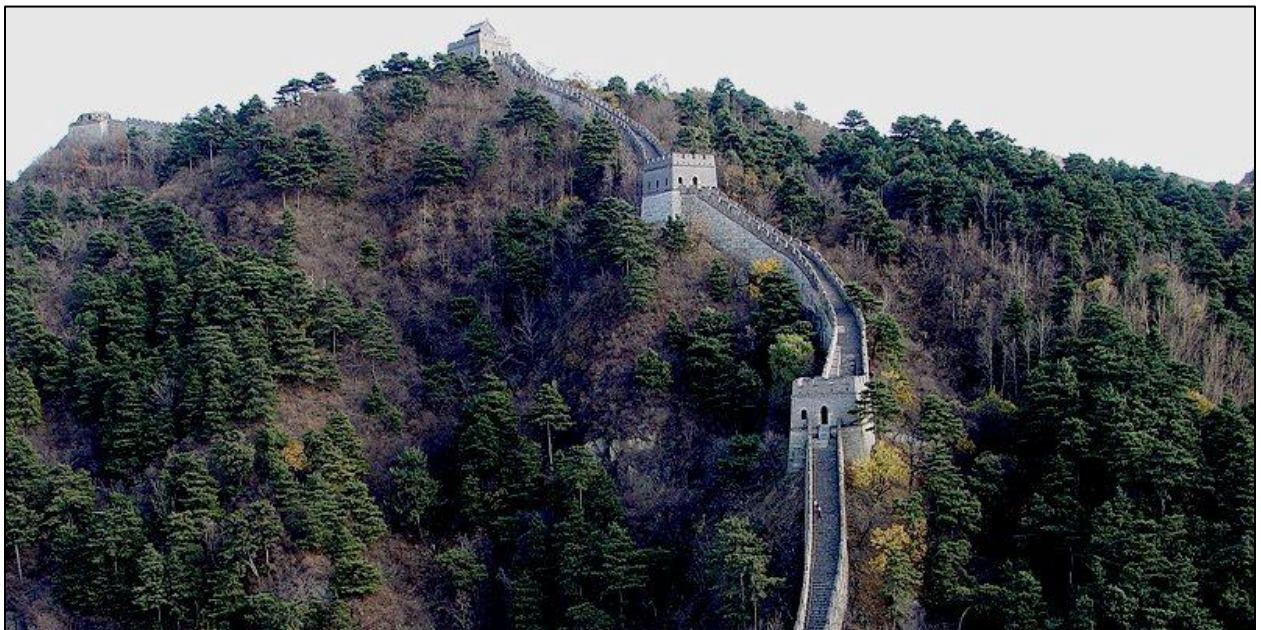


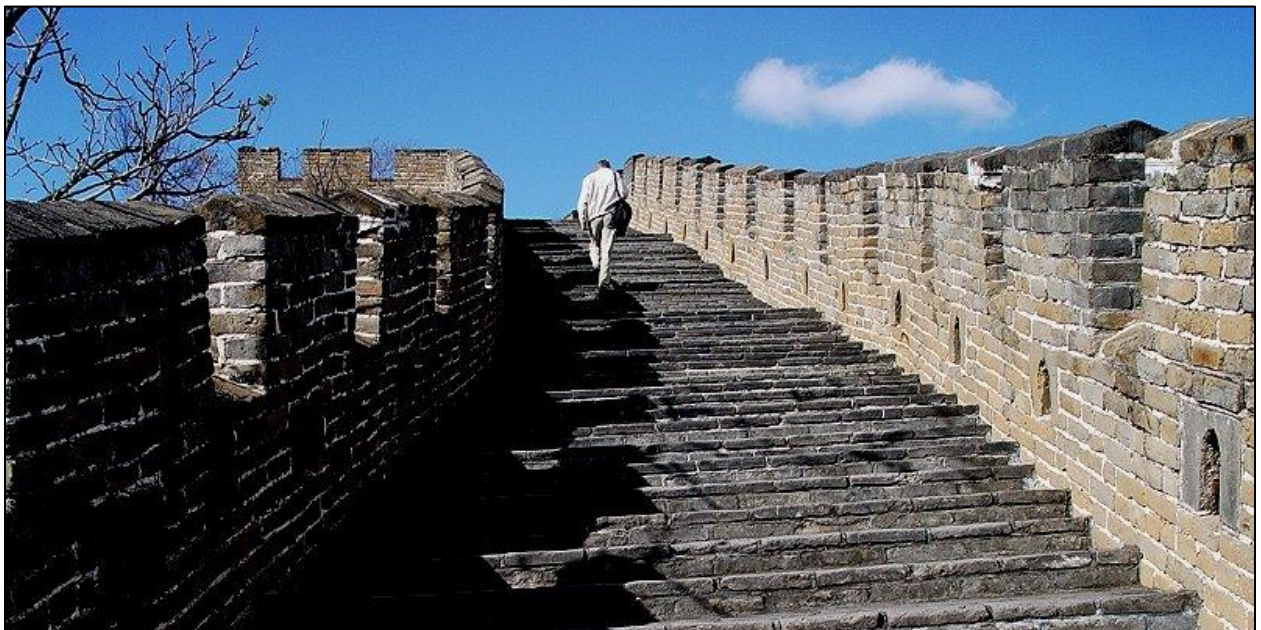


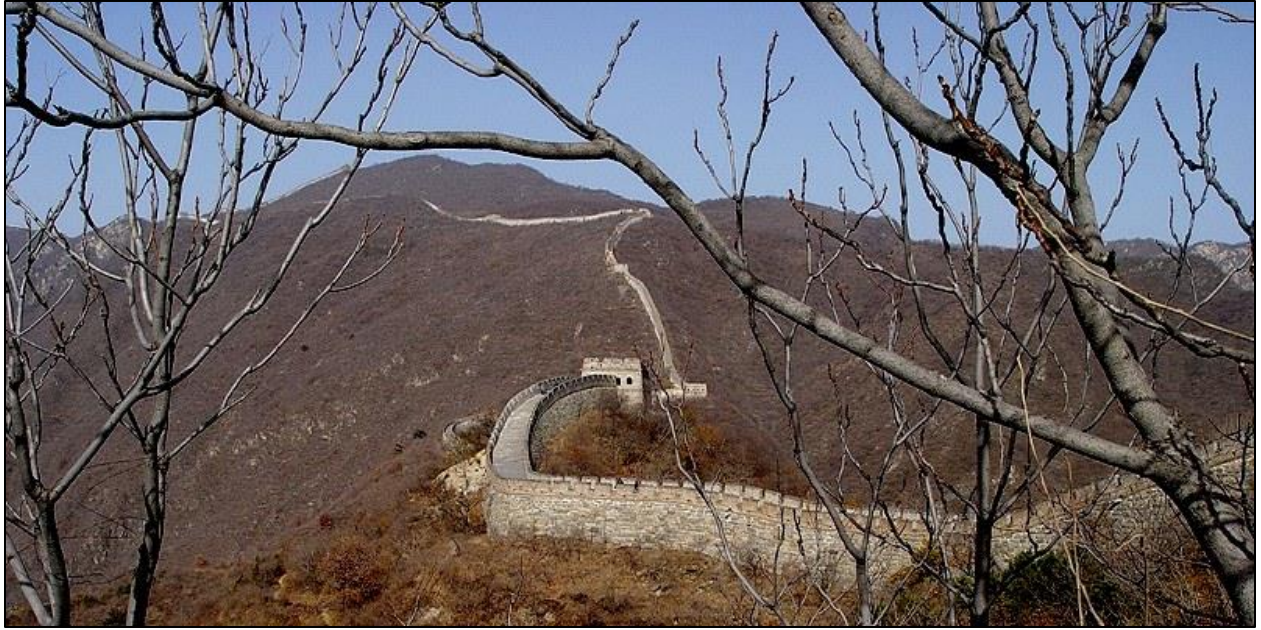


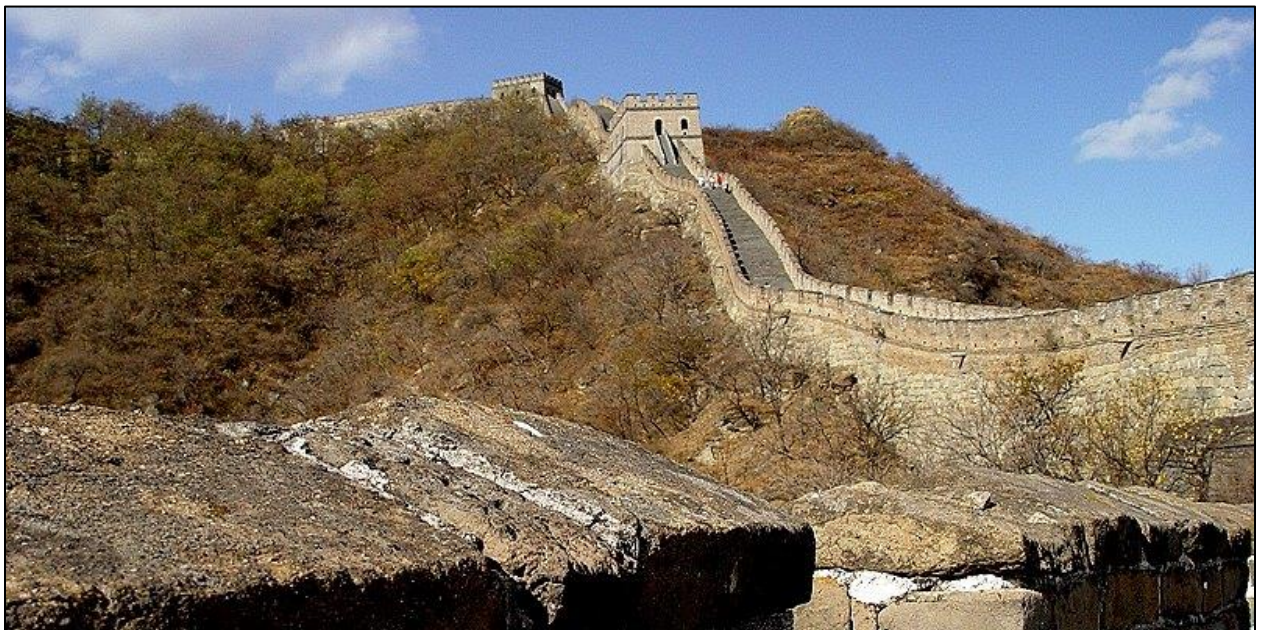












Chambers' students in China - quoting after Mao Zedong - said, "He who has not climbed *The Great Wall* is not a true man." Chambers climbed/walked part of it, so he guesses he is 'part man'. Again, the day he was there, he felt an intimacy that most visitors don't feel, perhaps, due to very few visitors touring the ancient barrier. He put together a video to accentuate his experience. The video is filter-enhanced to show shadow detail of the steps and blend Chambers and the wall as 'one'. The speed of the video is slowed down to dwell on the experience and to enhance the sound of the wind. Stills from the video follow:



Courtesy of Wikipedia:

First built in the mid-6th century during the Northern Qi, the Mutianyu section is older than the Badaling section of the Great Wall. During the Ming dynasty, under the supervision of Marshal Xu Da (a.k.a. Zhongshan Wang, Zhongshan, or Xu Zhongshan), construction of the present wall began, building over the previous wall. In 1404, a pass was built in the wall. In 1569, the Mutianyu Great Wall was rebuilt.

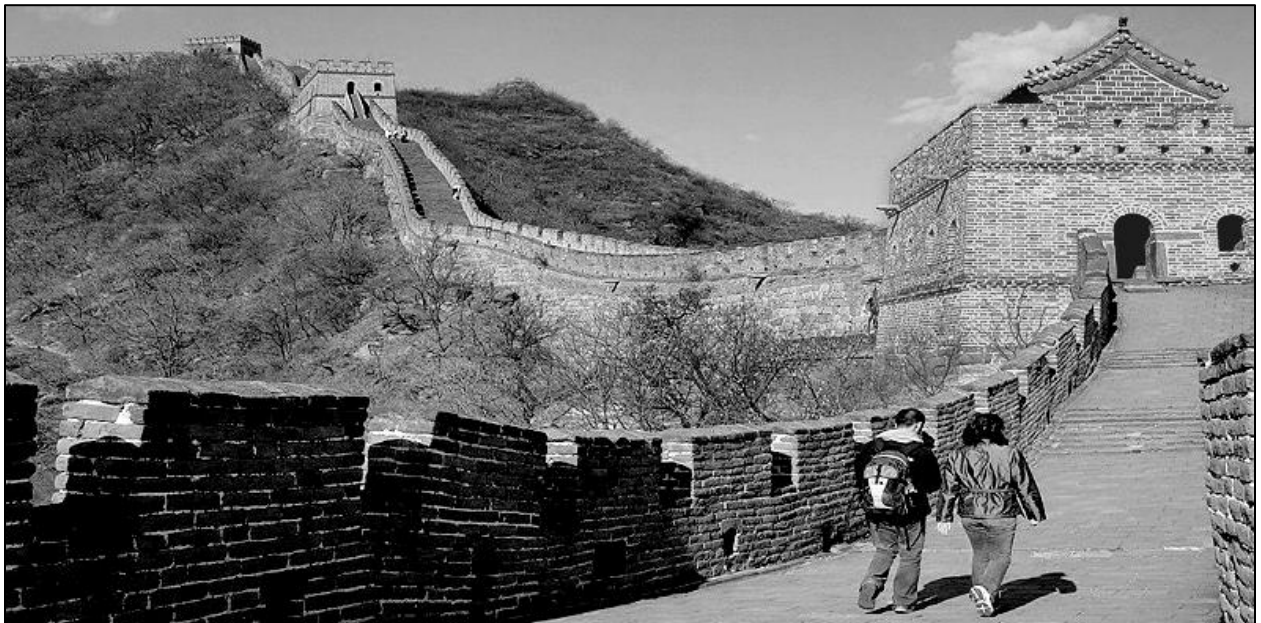
In 1568, the Longqing Emperor appointed Qi Jiguang as governor and military administrator of Jizhen, Changzhen and Baoding to help train the guards in the area. Qi Jiguang helped to maintain the 2000-li section of the Great Wall, which was finished in 1572. Qi Jiguang, upon noticing that the wall had no abutments, suggested the installation of abutments to officials. His suggestion was approved.

Built mainly with granite, the wall is 23 to 28 feet high, and its top is 13 to 16 feet wide. Compared with other sections of Great Wall, Mutianyu Great Wall possesses unique characteristics in its construction.

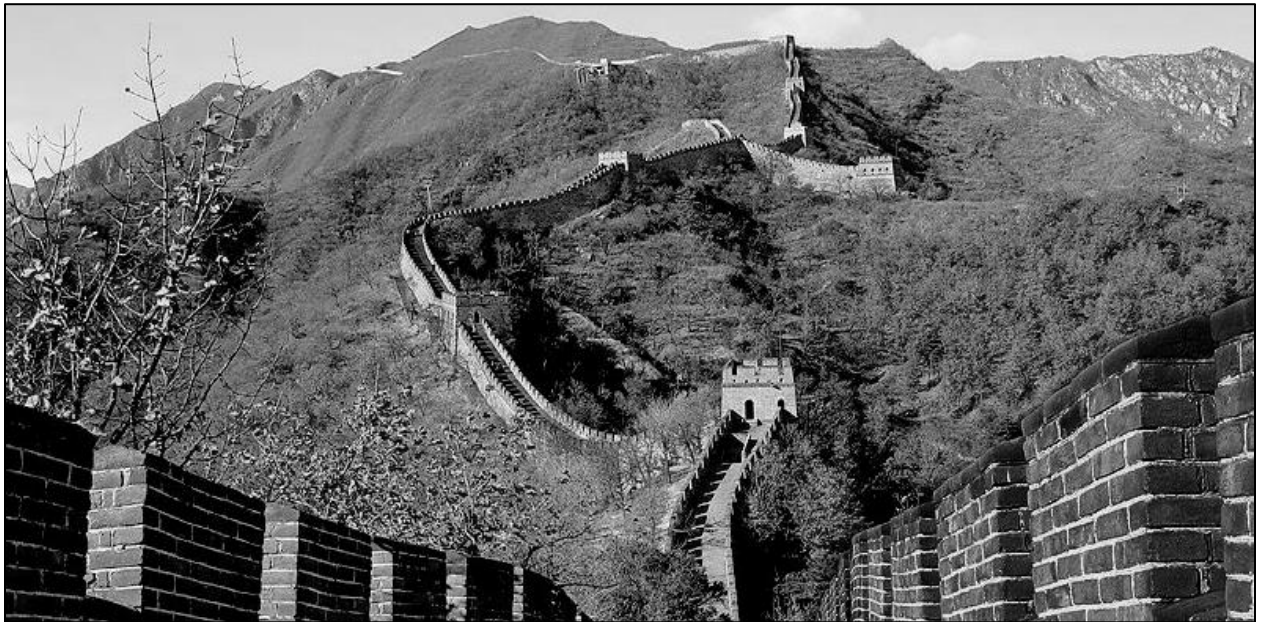
- Watchtowers are densely placed along this section of the Great Wall - 22 watchtowers on this 7,380-foot stretch.
- Both the outer and inner parapets are crenelated with merlons, so that shots could be fired at the enemy on both sides - a feature very rare on other parts of the Great Wall.
- The Mutianyu Pass consists of three watchtowers, one big tower in the center flanked by two smaller towers on both sides. Standing on the same terrace, the three watchtowers are connected to each other inside and compose a rarely seen structure among all sections of Great Wall. One of the side watchtowers has two graffiti canvases which are regularly replaced.

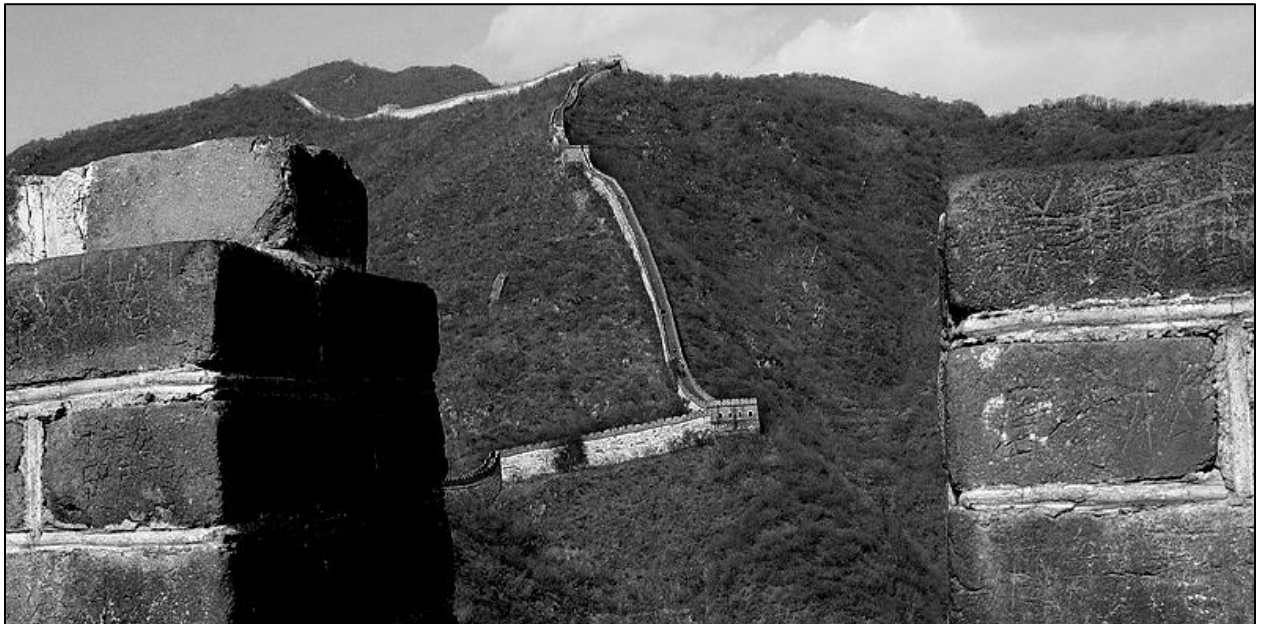
This section of Great Wall is surrounded by woodland and streams. The forest coverage rate is over 90 percent.

Chambers is partial to black and white, and he moves his coverage of Mutianyu in this direction as well:

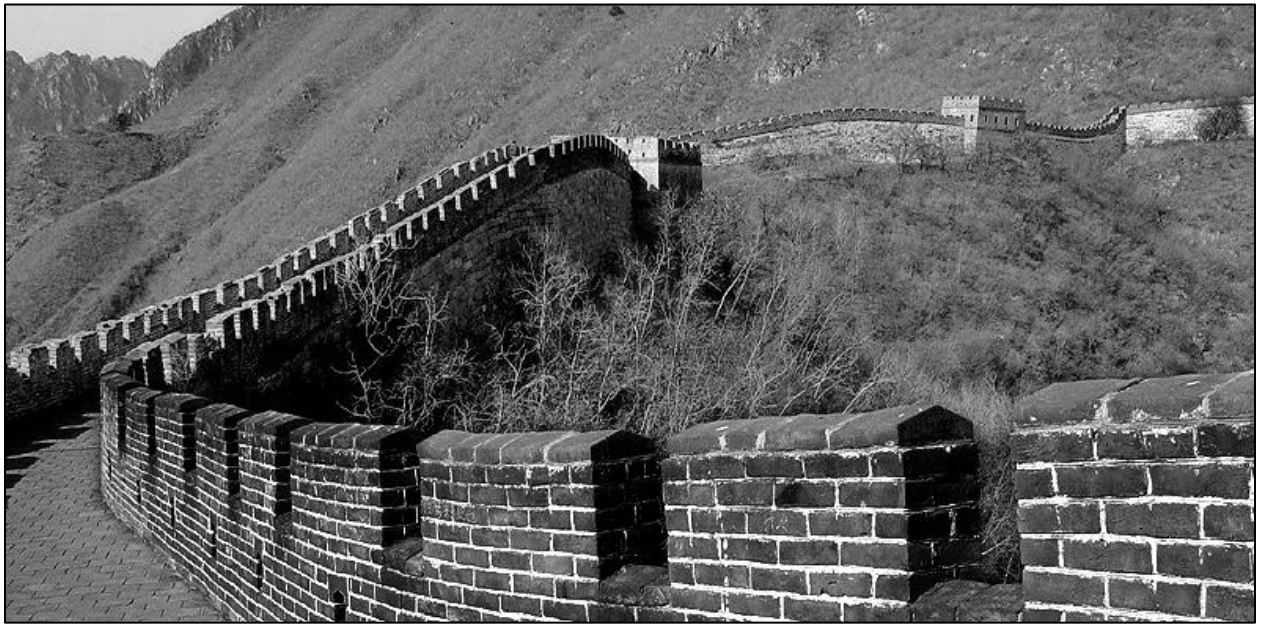


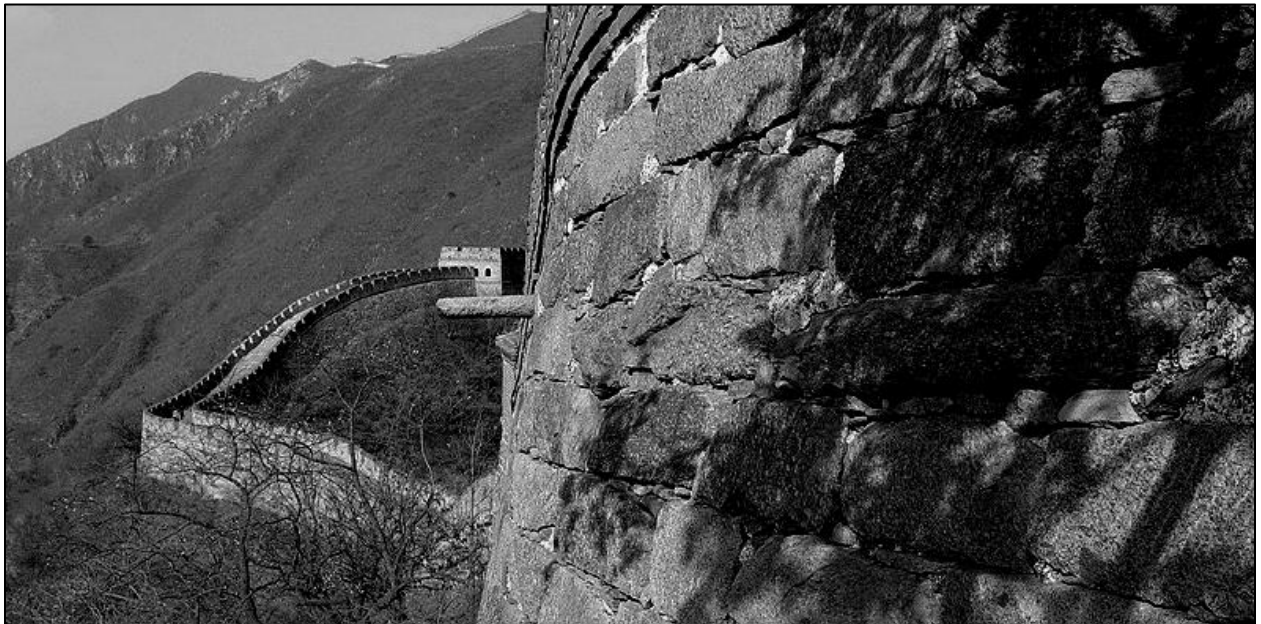
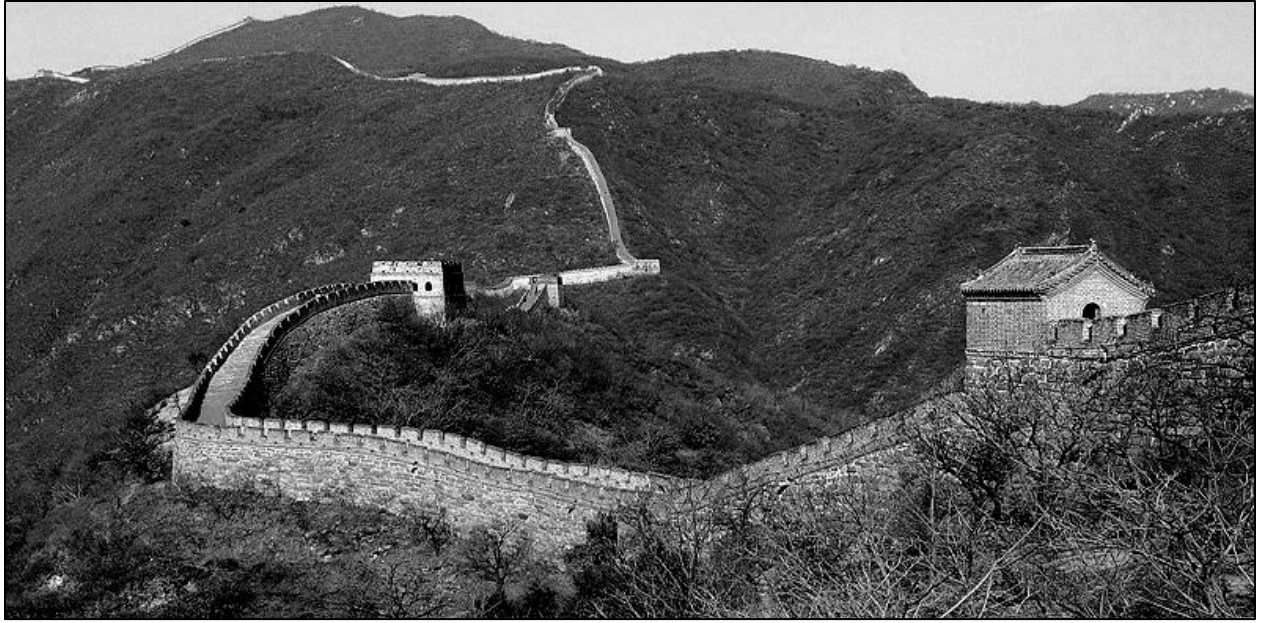




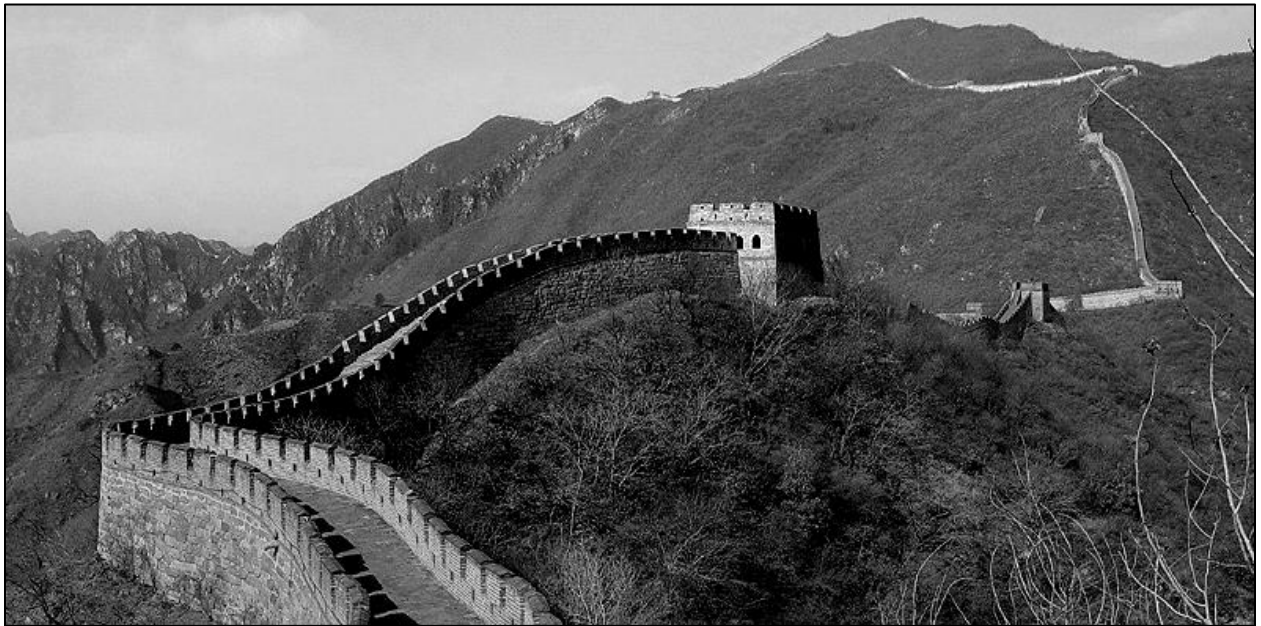




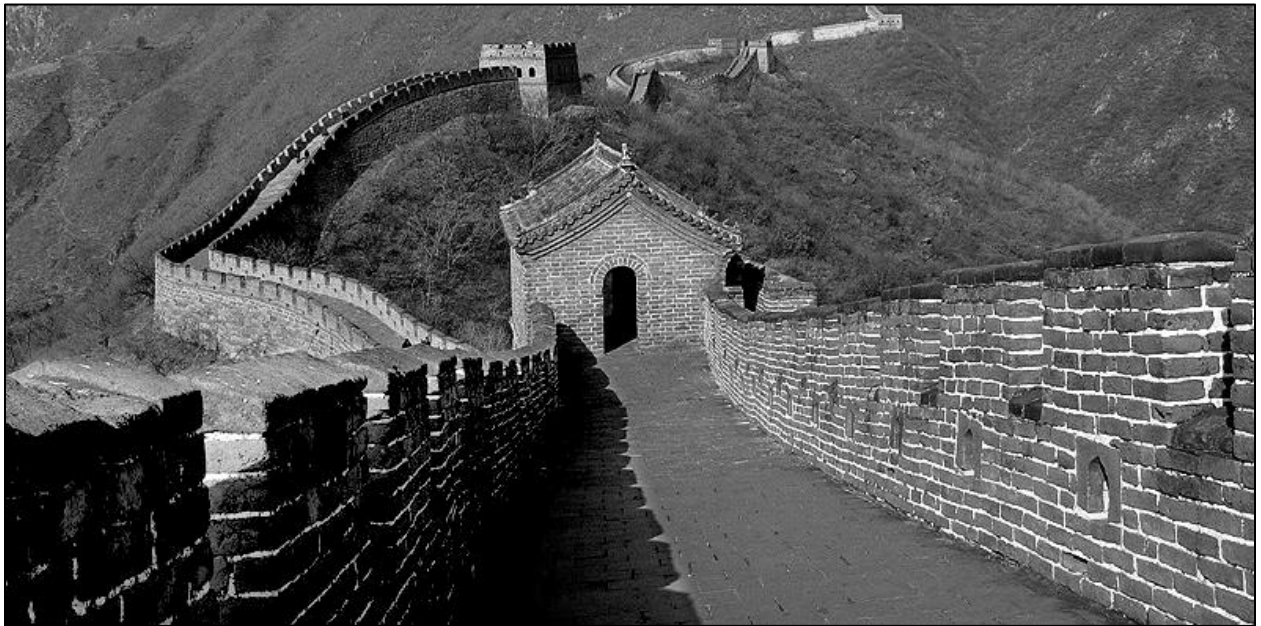


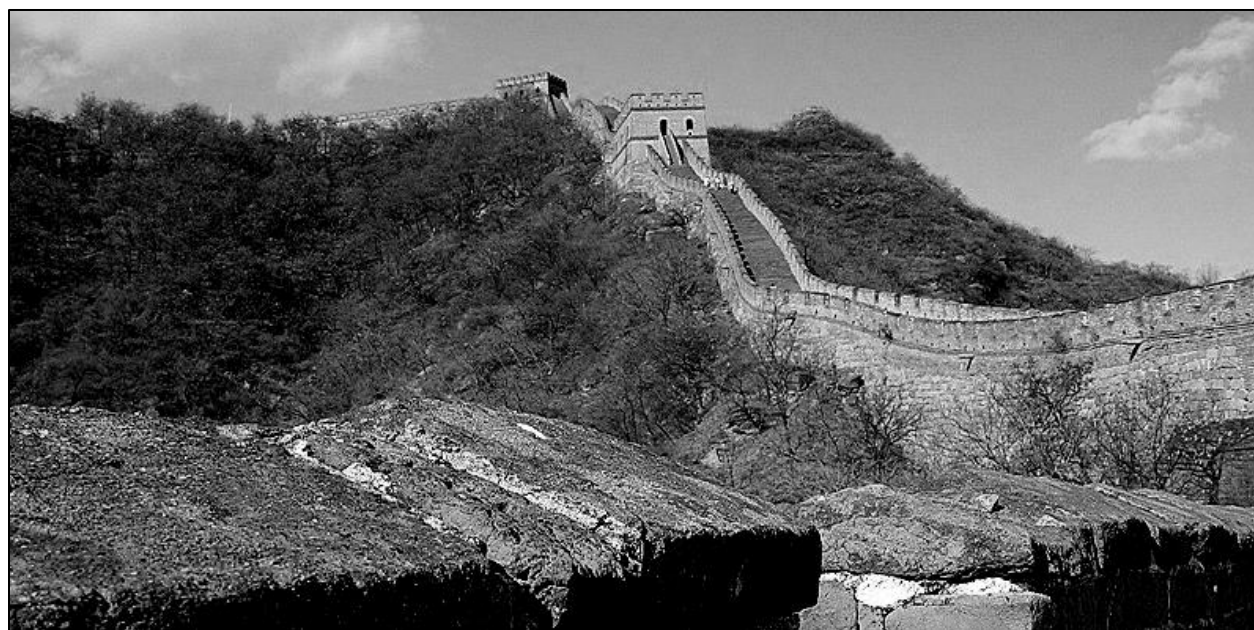












长城