

## ТУРИСТИЧЕСКИЙ ПОТЕНЦИАЛ ЗАМКОВ КИТАЯ

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В статье рассмотрены наиболее яркие памятники фортификационного зодчества Китая, схожие по своему характеру с белорусскими аналогами. Проанализирован их туристический потенциал, а также китайское восприятие термина «замок».

**Ключевые слова:** замки Китая; международный туризм; безвизовая политика; музеи.

## TOURISM POTENTIAL OF CHINESE CASTLES

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The article considers the most striking monuments of Chinese fortification architecture, similar in nature to their Belarusian counterparts. Their tourism potential is analyzed, as well as the Chinese perception of the term «castle».

**Keywords:** castles of China; international tourism; visa-free policy; museums.

In recent years, the interaction between China and Belarus in the field of tourism has developed dynamically, with a break for the COVID19 pandemic. Protocol to an intergovernmental agreement on a visa-free tourist regime between Belarus and China was signed on November 18, 2015. Currently, Belarusians can stay in China without a visa for up to 30 days during one visit, but no more than 90 days a year. Chinese tourists have the same conditions of stay in Belarus. The visa-free regime provides for tourist travel, business trips, private trips [1, с. 66–67].

At the same time, the description of China's tourism potential is not sufficiently presented in Belarusian historiography. Considering that the castles of Belarus are traditionally included in the tours for guests from China, it seems appropriate to also consider the tourism potential of Chinese castles.

For the Chinese, «castle» is a European concept. When Chinese mention the term «castle», they usually imagine building like «Mir Castle» and «Nesvizh castle». All of them have bright colors and rich decorations. For many Chinese girls, the castle is a symbol of romance. They even imagine some princesses, princes and nobles sitting in the castle drinking afternoon tea and holding a dance party.

But, in fact, China also has castles. Because there are many differences between Chinese and European castles, castles in China have great tourism

potential. First of all, some castles were built by royalty, some privately, some for China's ethnic minorities, and some for religious communities. Secondly, China not only has many castles left over from history, but also many imitation European-style castles built in recent years, and even some castles built by designers for themselves. What's more, there are also some castles in China that have been inhabited since ancient times. People who live there retain their own dialects, wear traditional clothes, and inherit the culture and traditions of their ancestors. Therefore, these castles are a combination of living and tourism. Last but not least, the architectural styles of Chinese castles are also various. The appearance of Chinese castles looks completely different from European castles. In China, some castles with ethnic elements, some castles with palace elements, some castles with fortification elements, and some castles with religious elements. That's why we think castles in China have great tourism potential. Now, we will choose some castles to introduce the value of them.

If you ask Chinese, which place is the closest to the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)? Most of them may think of the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty, the Forbidden City, the Ming Tombs, and maybe the Ming Xiaoling Tombs in Nanjing. Of course, these places are all witnesses of the Ming Dynasty. As time goes by, these places have lost their heat and become icy cultural relics, so they are not the closest places to the Ming Dynasty. Only in the Tunpu in Anshun, Guizhou, and in small places such as **Tianlongtun** [Fig. 1], Yunfengtun, and Baojiatun, the Ming Dynasty never went far, and the way of life 600 years ago still continues on a small scale [2].



*Fig. 1. WuLong Temple in Tianlong Tunpu (simplified Chinese: 天龙屯堡) – Ming Era temple-fortress (XIV c.)*

Firstly, the culture, custom, traditional, Ming Dynasty Mandarin and opera are completely different with other tourist attraction. This is one of the values of this castle. Tianlong Tunpu castle was built in the XIVth century for military purposes. A mysterious tribe known as «Tunpu People» has survived here for hundreds of years, who live in a real kingdom of stone – the cobblestone roads, stone houses, stone tiles, stone gates, stone city walls and stone watchtowers. «Tunpu People» was a Ming Dynasty army sent to Anshun from the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River more than 600 years ago [3]. Over the centuries, the garrisons have turned nearby areas into farmland, growing crops and building stone house villages for their own needs and uses. For tourists, Tunpu is an experience that travels through time and space. The Tunpu people continue to live almost the same lives as their ancestors 600 years ago. On approaching, it's easy to mistake these residents for ethnic minorities because of their traditional dress, usually blue robes, loose sleeves, lace embroidered cuffs for women, and special hairstyles. Isolated from the outside world, the Tunpu people strictly maintain their customs and proudly preserve the traditions of the Ming Dynasty. Many women in Tunpu made clothes by weaving and sewing. They are also good at making embroidered shoes, which is their own way of beautifying their feet. The sole is made of cloth, the vamp is slightly up-urved and the upper is embroidered with colorful patterns of flowers, fishes, birds, and insects [4].

Then, the particularity of the architectural style is also the key to attracting tourists. Among such stone castles, Tianlong Tunpu, 72 kilometers west of Guiyang, is the best preserved one. Since the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368), Tianlong has been an important military fortress, guarding the main gateway to Yunnan, a province in southwestern China. Therefore, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty sent troops for both defense and land reclamation. Today, more than 5,000 people continue to live in Tianlong Tunpu. As the descendants of the Ming Dynasty imperial garrison, the military elements in the design are readily apparent. At that time, stone was the hardest material available. The village's high-walled and narrow lanes are like a maze for first-time tourists, giving residents a clear advantage in fighting in the village. Tunpu people built houses not only for living, but also for defense. The house was built of solid stone, with black tile roofs and white walls – typical of southern dwellings. There are shooting holes on all sides of the building, and sentry towers are scattered throughout the village. Enter the alley of the village and you will see the barracks. The mountains surrounding Tianlong Tunbao are almost archives of historical buildings. The ancient city walls and the castle-like Wulong Temple are national cultural relics. There is a Ming

Dynasty weapons factory behind the mountain. Beacon towers, battlements and outposts are one of the many landscapes [2].

The tourism value of Tianlong Tunbao is made up of these legacy castle buildings and the living Ming Dynasty culture. Castles like this are one of the potential values of Chinese castle tourism.

**The Potala Palace** is a dzong fortress in the city of Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China. It is the ruling center of the unity of politics and religion in Tibet. The whole palace has a distinct Tibetan style, built on the mountain, with a majestic momentum. There are countless treasures in the palace, which is an art palace.

The site on which the Potala Palace rises is built over a palace erected by Songtsen Gampo (33rd Emperor of Tibetan Empire, 618–650) on the Red Hill. The Potala contains two chapels on its northwest corner that conserve parts of the original building. One is the Phakpa Lhakhang, the other is the Chogyel Drupuk, a recessed cavern identified as Songtsen Gampo's meditation cave. Lozang Gyatso, the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, started the construction of the modern Potala Palace in 1645 after one of his spiritual advisers, Konchog Chophel (died in 1646), pointed out that the site was ideal as a seat of government, situated as it is between Drepung and Sera monasteries and the old city of Lhasa. The external structure was built in 3 years, while the interior, together with its furnishings, took 45 years to complete. The Dalai Lama and his government moved into the Potrang Karpo (White Palace) in 1649. Construction lasted until 1694, some twelve years after his death. The Potala was used as a winter palace by the Dalai Lama from that time. The Potrang Marpo (Red Palace) was added between 1690 and 1694 [5].

Because it is the Palace of Arts, the tourist value here is very high. The walls of all the palaces, Buddhist halls and corridors of the Potala Palace are covered with frescoes, and there are various reliefs around them. Most of the murals and sculptures are colorful, and the themes are mainly plateau scenery, historical legends, Buddhist stories and the construction scene of the Potala Palace, which have high historical and artistic value. There are a large number of cultural relics and treasures in the palace, including nearly 10,000 Thangkas (Buddhist scroll paintings) and tens of thousands of various Buddha statues in gold, silver, jade, wood carving and clay sculpture. In addition, there are the spiritual pagodas of the Dalai Lamas of the past dynasties, the amnesty books and seals of the emperors of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1636–1912), seals, gifts, plaques and scriptures presented by all walks of life, and books, instruments and offerings for personal use in the palace. Among them, the

finger bone relics of Sakyamuni and the golden book and gold seal given by the emperor of the Qing Dynasty are all rare treasures and invaluable [5].

**Chengde Mountain Resort** is a large complex of imperial palaces and gardens situated in the Shuangqiao District of Chengde in northeastern Hebei province, northern China, about 225 km. northeast of Beijing. It was built between 1703 and 1792 during the Qing dynasty. The Mountain Resort took 89 years to complete. This resort was frequently used as a summer palace during the Qing dynasty. The Kangxi, Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors often spent several months a year here to escape the summer heat in the capital city of Beijing. In 1994, the Mountain Resort was awarded World Heritage Site status. Now it is mainly visited as a tourist attraction.

The castle has both military and political significance. In order to restricting the external pressure from the north (Russian Empire and Mongolians), the emperor trained his soldiers in this castle (the Eight Banners soldiers). And as we know, The Qing Dynasty was established by the Man ethnic minority in China. So, in order to ease the relationship between Man, Tibetan, Mongolian and Han, the emperor built some temples with different architectural styles at that time. Among those temples, 8 are directly managed by the Qing government. The emperor can use Chengde Mountain Resort to strengthen control of various ethnic groups and strengthen ties. That's why the emperor was spending half of his time here every year taking care of government affairs and celebrations [6].

Then we can pay attention to its architectural values. Firstly, according to the architectural style, the Outer Eight Temples are directly managed by the Qing government, are divided into three types: Tibetan temples, Han temples and combined Han and Tibetan temples. These temples integrate the essence of Han, Tibetan and other ethnic architectural arts, and have an Imperial style. The Outer Eight Temples reflects the expansion of Chinese cultural tolerance and the comprehensive creation of architectural achievements by religious art in the Qing Dynasty. From the Emperor Kangxi to the Qianlong period, it was formed by absorbing the architectural characteristics of Tibetan and Xinjiang temples while combining traditional Han style methods. Puning Temple built in the 20th year of Qianlong (1755) is one of the representatives. It absorbed the styles of various ethnic groups, combined them in a harmonious and natural manner [7, 8].

Secondly, Chengde Mountain Resort includes most of the architectural images of ancient China, such as pavilions and gardens. It shows the superb skills of ancient Chinese wooden frame structure architecture. It also realizes the perfect combination of wooden frame structure and masonry structure, Han-style architectural forms and minority architectural forms. In addition,

the application of the highest super skills in ancient China, such as architectural decoration and Buddhist statues, constitutes a spectacle in the history of ancient Chinese architecture [6].

Nowadays, with the development of tourism in Chengde Mountain Resort, a Mongolian-style resort hotel has also been built in the park. Tourists can live in yurts, taste Inner Mongolian delicacies, and appreciate the ethnic decoration of yurts. And not far from Chengde Mountain Resort, there are natural grasslands where tourists can ride horses, which is also a place to attract tourists.

The diversification of architectural styles and the superb garden art of Chengde Mountain Resort have become the reasons for attracting many tourists. So, this castle has high tourist value.

In recent years, many modern European-style castles have appeared in China, such as **Wencheng Castle** and **Swan Castle**. Huawei corporation spent huge sums of money to build a European town in Dongyuan, province Guangdong, where all the buildings are European castles. There is also a castle that has exploded in China in recent years, and the BBC has also reported it. That is «**Yelanggu Castle**», a castle that the designer spent 20 years building at his own expense.

The diversity of existing ancient castles in China and the uniqueness of emerging castles make Chinese castles more and more attractive to Chinese and foreign tourists. It is believed that the influence of Chinese castles will be seen by the world in the future, after pandemic times end. The castles of China will be interesting for visiting by tourists from Belarus, as well as museum specialists.

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