

Introduction for Teachers

In his book *The Arts of China*, Michael Sullivan writes, “The Chinese painter deliberately avoids a complete statement because he knows that we can never know everything... All he can do is to liberate the imagination and set it wandering... His landscape is not a final statement, but a starting point. Not an end, but the opening of a door.”¹ That is precisely how we view our book, *China Since 1644: A History Through Primary Sources*.² Our goal is to introduce your students to events that occurred in China and people who lived through them. In addition, in the final section, we take a look at contemporary China. Through essays, primary source documents, and student activities based on the documents, our book provides a starting point for understanding the complex, vibrant, and sometimes tumultuous recent history of a people with the longest continuous civilization in the world.

“In 1600, the empire of China was the largest and most sophisticated of all the unified realms on earth,” writes Jonathan Spence in his seminal work *The Search for Modern China* (p. 7). By 1800, the empire was not only still the most sophisticated state on earth, but had more than doubled in size. Why then, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, did we talk about China *becoming* one of the global superpowers? What happened in the intervening centuries?

Who Are We?

Primary Source (<http://www.primarysource.org/>) is a non-profit global education organization dedicated to helping K–12 teachers prepare students for the challenges and complexities of today's interconnected world. Founded in 1989 by two committed and experienced educators, Anna Roelofs, M. Ed., and Anne Watt, Ed. D., the organization offers a rich variety of professional development and curriculum resources necessary to teach global literacy. Primary Source is guided by a commitment to helping students learn history and understand culture such that their knowledge base is broad, their thinking flexible and given to inquiry, and their attitudes about peoples of the world open and inclusive.

We provide learning opportunities for teachers in the content areas of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, the United States and on global issues that cross regional boundaries. Our core offerings include school-year [seminars](#), online programs, and intensive [summer institutes](#). In addition we offer one-day workshops, webinars and book discussion groups. For interested and qualified teachers, we also lead [study tours](#) to different regions of the world, including most recently China, Japan, and India. Schools and school districts interested in customized programs within our content areas can take advantage of our in-district programs.

Primary Source has developed printed publications and resources available on our website for use by teachers. The [Clara Hicks Resource Library](#) (located in Watertown, Massachusetts) holds over 7,000 books, films, and curriculum units. Our online resource guide *Understanding Modern*

¹ Michael Sullivan, *The Arts of China* (3rd edition), Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 156.

² formerly *China in the World: A History Since 1644*

China (<http://resources.primarysource.org/modernchina>) offers book, film, curriculum, and website resources for teaching and learning about modern China. In the spring of 2004, Heinemann Publishing, Inc. released *Making Freedom: African Americans in U.S. History*, a series of five curriculum sourcebooks on African American history from the fifteenth century through the Civil Rights Movement. Each book contains primary sources, including diaries, slave narratives, maps, official government documents, autobiographies, cartoons, broadsides, and photographs. We used the same model for *The Enduring Legacy of Ancient China* published by Cheng & Tsui in 2006, and again in this volume, *China Since 1644: A History Through Primary Sources*.

Using Primary Sources

Primary Source, the organization, takes its name from the same term used by historians to distinguish original, uninterpreted material from secondary or third-hand accounts. Thus a photograph, a memoir, or a letter is a primary source, while an essay interpreting the photograph or memoir is usually, though not always, a secondary source. A textbook, still further removed, is a tertiary source.

China Since 1644 utilizes a range of primary sources, some of which have never previously appeared in print. We include letters, writings of missionaries, treaties, imperial writing, woodcuts, propaganda posters, poetry, short stories, photographs, and more. All Chinese text has been translated, of course, making it, arguably, no longer a primary source. We have selected translations by eminent scholars to ensure the most accurate reading possible.

While it is imperative to read secondary sources in order to understand context and background, access to “the real stuff” (albeit some in translation) raises students’ interest and curiosity and offers opportunities for them to make discoveries on their own. When textbooks are used as the only source of information, it is much more difficult for students to take ownership, both of their own learning and of a particular body of knowledge. It can be difficult to remember other people’s generalizations or conclusions. Original source material provides students with rich opportunities for inquiry, and the chance to move from concrete to abstract thinking.

How to Use This Book

Student Audience

Note that this edition has been written for a student audience with the intention of directly engaging students in the activities. Clearly, many of the activities require your instruction and leadership. Phrases such as “You will be...” or “Prepare to...” pre-alert students as to how they will engage with the learning.

The Organization of *China Since 1644*

The first two chapters in the book introduce information helpful to understanding all the chapters that follow. Chapter 1 looks at China’s geography and diverse population of today, and provides a sense of how the vast majority of China’s people—the rural population—lived in much of the

twentieth century and before. Chapter 2 steps back into the sixteenth century, the last full century of Ming dynasty China, to showcase the cities and capture the lives of the elite who contributed to making the empire “the most sophisticated on earth.”

The remaining chapters are arranged chronologically and clustered in units. Each unit begins with an overview and most also include a timeline that lists the events in China in the context of related events in regional and world history.

Each chapter contains:

- Chapter Contents
- Key Idea
- Guiding Questions
- Terms to Know
- Introductory Essay
- Primary Sources
- Activities
- Suggested Resources
- A Closer Look

Together, the **context essay** at the beginning of the book, the **unit overviews**, and the **introductory essays** to individual chapters provide you and your students with the background information necessary to understand the primary sources and engage in the activities. The book is designed so that chapters can be taught independently of each other. You can select the topics that fit best into your curriculum and the timeframe you have available. For example, if you cannot fully incorporate the entire Unit III "Struggles to Create a Unified China (1911–1949)" into your curriculum, you may still be able to use Chapter 12 , *War Continues (1945-1949)* within that unit. *We strongly recommend that you read a unit overview before selecting an isolated chapter, and that students read the overview before being introduced to the chapter.*

Because the essays and chapters were written by a group of scholars and teachers, they offer a variety of writing and instructional approaches. While the format of each chapter is the same, we have respected the authors’ voices and have not edited them to a uniform length or style.

Terms to Know are included, and the words are defined in the **glossary**. (The glossary is in the book and on the companion website.)

Each chapter includes a variety of **activities** designed to engage student interest. Each activity is based on one or more primary sources. Excerpts of the **primary sources** appear in the book; in most cases, longer versions are included on the companion website. *It is important to understand that in order to complete each of the activities, students must read the full text of the document on the companion website.*

Suggested activities support the literacy component of the **Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies** by presenting a multitude of rich informational texts that

require close reading for analysis. Many of the activities, like the Common Core standards, juxtapose primary sources with different perspectives and in different media, allowing students to compare their arguments, structure, and tone. Students are asked to explore sequences of events and ideas and analyze how they develop. Writing and debating activities require them to marshal evidence from the text to support their arguments. The use of maps, charts, and photographs support visual literacy components, while research tasks allow students to practice evaluating sources, prioritizing information, and integrating information across complex texts to develop a coherent understanding of an issue. Literary sources offer a host of opportunities to analyze cultural experiences depicted in works from outside the United States, while building students' understanding of craft and structure. All sources in the book build students' knowledge of academic and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate for the secondary grade levels.

We would not expect you to use every activity in every chapter. Rather, just as you select the chapters, you should choose activities that dovetail best with your curriculum and meet the instructional needs and learning styles of your students. We have set out a buffet—we do not intend for all of it to be consumed by each teacher. We expect that you will adapt the activities when necessary to meet your objectives such as changing a debate into a persuasive writing assignment.

A list of **Suggested Resources** is provided in each chapter in the book and on the companion website. Students should be cautioned to carefully evaluate information found online, always considering who the author is, who sponsors the site, and what perspectives or agendas might be present.

Wherever applicable, chapters include the special feature **A Closer Look**. This feature gives the reader a more in-depth look at men and women who played key roles in events explored in the chapter.

The Companion Website

The companion website at www.chinasince1644.com contains a wealth of chapter, supplementary, and additional materials to support you and your students.

- **Chapter Materials** include primary source documents, suggested resources, and links to websites for specific activities. Many of the documents on the companion website include background introductions not found in the text. Most documents have been abridged in the book, and in some cases, where many photographs are available, not all appear in the book. However, primary source materials, including color images, appear in full on the companion website. Websites in Suggested Resources will be updated annually, but we recommend that you check websites before giving students assignments.
- **Additional Resources** include essays, maps, online search tips, indexes of all slides and slide shows, and a glossary.

- **Teacher Resources**, in addition to this introduction, provide information on how the activities support the Common Core State Standards, a resource guide for Understanding Modern China, and directions for many of the teaching strategies used in the activities. Teacher Resources also has a link to Web 2.0 Tools for the Global Classroom with video and website resources for incorporating blogs, wikis, mapping sites, slideshows, and social bookmarking into the activities in *China Since 1644*.

A Note on the Text

In 1859, Sir Thomas Francis Wade, professor of Chinese at Cambridge University, created a system for the romanization of Chinese characters. His successor Herbert Giles revised it in 1892, establishing the Wade-Giles system, which served as the primary English-language method of writing Chinese in the Roman alphabet until the middle of the twentieth century. In 1953, the People's Republic of China devised its own system of Romanization, called *pinyin*. Most older translations use the Wade-Giles spelling of Chinese words, while recent publications have increasingly adopted *pinyin* as the standard. We use *pinyin* throughout *China Since 1644*, with just a few exceptions. The names of Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen appear in their older Romanized forms because those spellings are most familiar to the majority of readers.

Note that for Chinese names in the Suggested Resources, we have followed the ordering of first and last names that the author uses in publishing his or her work. Chinese authors using the Chinese convention appear last name then first name with no comma separating the two. This also applies to Chinese who are well-known in the West by the Chinese form of their name (Deng Xiaoping or Ding Ling). Chinese authors using the Western convention appear last name, first name with a comma between the two. In the introductory essays, the first time key words and phrases appear, we also include the word written in simplified Chinese characters.

All monetary figures cited in the book are given according to the currency of the time; they have not been converted into present-day terms.

Finally, many of the English primary source documents written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries include spelling, capitalization, and syntax typical for the period. We have left those unchanged. In a few letters, we did add periods where sentences end and capital letters where new ones begin for clarity.