

PREPARATION FOR UNDERSTANDING

Preparation includes learning as much as possible about the country and culture of China before you depart. Below is a *partial* list of books and films that are both enjoyable and educational. Most of these works, and more, are available at your local library, bookstore, or directly from the publisher.

History

Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village

by William Hinton (Vintage, 1966)

This is a classic account of the Communist Revolution and subsequent reforms in China. William Hinton stayed in the liberated area of North China from 1947-1953, a period spanning China before, during, and after the revolution. He served as a tractor technician and teacher, living with the peasants of Long Bow village and experiencing the Revolution with them.

Red Star Over China

by Edgar Snow (Bantam Books, 1978)

This is a classic book about China. Originally written in 1938, it is based on Edgar Snow's experience as a young journalist going behind enemy lines to interview the communist leadership in Yen-an at the end of the Long March. Contains interviews with Mao at a time when some thought him dead and very few predicted that he would emerge as the leader of a victorious communist state. Snow writes with great sympathy for the communists. As a result, the book is well known and loved by the Chinese even today.

China: Alive in a Bitter Sea

by Fox Butterfield (Bantam Books, 1983)

This is a thought-provoking book about China immediately following the Cultural Revolution. Written by a Chinese-speaking correspondent of The New York Times, it contains many interviews with persons who lived through and suffered during the 1966-1976 period.

Son of the Revolution

Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro (Fontana, 1983 or 37 Vintage, 1984)

Liang Heng's own story of growing up during the Cultural Revolution as the son of intellectuals. One of the most readable eyewitness accounts of what the 1966-1976 periods was like for many Chinese.

The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800-1985

by John K. Fairbank (Harper & Row, 1986)

Written by one of America's greatest China scholars, this book traces the Chinese Revolution from its origins in the early 1800's to the mid 1980's. Professor Fairbank calls this readable book his personal account of China's king disaster, struggle, and rebirth compiled from the work of hundreds of others.

The Search for Modern China

Jonathan Spence (W. W. Norton, 1990)

This is the work to read if you want a readable history with a scholar's depth. The drama of Chinese four or five hundred years makes for heartrending reading.

Wild Swans

Jung Chang (Flamingo, 1991)

A family saga spanning three generations against the backdrop of China's turbulent 20th century history fascinating both as historical overview and as domestic drama. A similar work is *Life and Death in Shanghai* by Nien Cheng (Grafton, 1984)

Bitter Winds: A Memoir of My Years in China's Gulag

by Harry Wu (John Wiley, 1994)

Imprisoned by Chinese authorities in mid-1955, Harry Wu has written eloquently and grimly about his years in prison camps.

Daughter of the River

Hong Ying (Grove Press, 1999)

A memoir of growing up in an area of Chongqing overlooking the Jianling and Yangtze rivers, in the 1970's and 80's.

Political Events

Bringing Down the Great Wall

Fang Lizhi (Knopf, 1990)

China's leading dissident, now in exile in the United States, articulates his position that democracy and human rights are central to China's modernization movement. A courageous individual's heartfelt thought on his country.

New Ghost, Old Dreams: Chinese Rebel Voices

Gerenie Barne and Linda Jaivin (Times Books, 1992)

A collection of stories, poems, essays, reports, speeches. and intercoms that capture the emerging ebullient and provocative spirit of the Chinese.

The Spirit of Chinese Politics

Lucien W. Pye (Harvard, 1992)

An insightful analysis of the deeper political culture that informs the Chinese political universe. How Chinese traditional and modern political values will evolve or stagnate is given prominent attention.

China Wakes

Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl Widunn (Times Books, 1994)

A state of the nation account of contemporary Chinese politics and society by renowned Western journalists.

Mandate of Heaven

Orville Schell (Simon & Schuster, 1994)

Detailed discussion of the crisis of faith in the Chinese Communist Party following the Tiananmen massacre.

China's New Rulers: The Secret Files

Andrew Nathan and Bruce Gilley, (New York Review Books, 2002)

This provocative book draws on secret primary documents to reveal the inside story of the rise to power – and plans for the future – of the seven to nine men who in October 2002 took over China's Politburo Standing committee, the 39th most power center in the country.

The New Chinese Empire: And What It Means for the United States

Ross Terrill, (Basic Books, 2003)

Experienced China-watcher Terrill has viewed with a skeptical eye China's emergence as a major player in the international community.

China in the Global Market

The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century

Thomas L. Friedman, (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005)

Thomas L. Friedman, columnist for the New York Time, describes current globalization as a flattening of world into a level playing field in which American workers should be preparing to "create value through leadership" and "sell personality." Globalization 3.0, as he calls it, is driven not by major corporations or giant trade organizations, but by individuals: desktop freelancers and innovative startups all over the world (but especially in India and China) who can compete--and win--not just for low-wage manufacturing and information labor but, increasingly, for the highest-end research and design work as well.

The World is Flat [Updated and Expanded]: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century

Thomas L. Friedman, (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006)

Friedman has embraced this flat world in his own work, continuing to report on his story after his book's release and releasing an unprecedented hardcover update of the book a year later with 100 pages of revised and expanded material. Friedman has more to say about what he now calls "uploading," the direct-from-the-bottom creation of culture, knowledge, and innovation through blogging, podcasts, and open-source software. And in response to the pleas of many of his readers about how to survive the new flat world, he makes specific recommendations about the technical and creative training he thinks will be required to compete in the "New Middle" class.

Tibet

The Struggle for Modern Tibet, The Autobiography of Tashi Tsering

Melvyn Goldstein, William Siebenschuh, and Tashi Tsering (M.E. Sharpe, 1997)

A moving autobiography of a Tibetan nationalist with a burning desire to reform and modernize the "old society" presents for the first time a personal portrait of Tibet that is realistic – neither a feudal hell, as Beijing would have it, nor Shangri-la, as many sympathetic outsiders would have it.

Virtual Tibet, Searching for Shangri-la from the Himalayas to Hollywood

Orville Schell (First Owl Books Edition, 2001)

One of the preeminent experts on modern China and Tibet undertakes a strange and wondrous odyssey into our Tibetan fantasies. At once, comic and insightful, this book takes us beyond the fantasies to the reality of an isolated region that has repeatedly won the West's adoration and paid the price for believing that our allegiance is profound.

Travel Guides

Lonely Planet China (China a Travel Survival Kit, 9th Ed)(2005)

This comprehensive guide makes China accessible to the independent or group traveler. It contains all the information you need to explore this massive, fascinating country. Be sure to get the most recent version.

Documentaries

China from the Inside

A co-production of KQED Public Television and Granada Television for PBS, Granada International and the BBC, in association with Kostyk Communications (2006)

Episodes include Power and the People, deals with the governance of China, The Women, talks about the past and future for Chinese women, Shifting Nature, looks at China's environmental challenges, and Freedom, explores China's conflict between personal freedom and governance.

China In the Red

Frontline Produced by Sue Willaims (2003)

A story of the human face, and human costs, of the transformation of a nation struggling to redefine itself. The lives of ordinary people living in extraordinary time. Purchase or view online at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/red/>

Tiananmen: The Gate of Heavenly Peace

Directed by Carma Hinton and Dachas Gordon (1996)

With an international group of scholars and participants in the events in Tiananmen in 1989, Hinton and Gordon spent six years investigating this important project. More than 150 hours of historical and contemporary archival footage were analyzed in order to conduct the most complete and accurate picture to date of the 1989 events and their historical context.

Healing and the Mind, With Bill Moyers (1993)

The first episode of this six part series is a concise and fascinating glimpse into the world of Chinese traditional medicine.

Heart of the Dragon

Time Life Video (1984)

A series of 12 videotapes covering various aspects of China's society in the early 1980s. Focus is on coming to terms with modernity soon after the opening up to the outside world.

Small Happiness

Directed by Carma Hinton and Richard Golden (1984)

Women of the rural village of Long Bow talk about marriage, birth control, work and daily life in China in the early 1980s.

Films

In addition to films listed below, works by critically acclaimed Chinese director Zhang Yimou are highly recommended, including titles such as *Red Sorghum*, *Raise the Red Lantern*, *Ju Kou*, and *The Story of Qiu Ju*.



The Blue Kite

Directed by Tian Zhaungzhuang

Vivid and disturbing account of a personal family's story set in the backdrop of modern Chinese history.

Farewell My Concubine

Directed by Chen Kaige

A powerful and touching picture of two boys growing up together as Beijing opera singers in an opera company in old Beijing. The intense and sometimes cruel training bonds them together and eventually leads to unrivaled fame. An artist's view of the tragedies of modern Chinese history.

The Joy Luck Club

Directed by Wayne Wang

Based on the best selling novel by Amy Tan. Four Chinese mothers and their daughters tell their eight life stories, taking us between old China and America, between feudal society and the modern world, between love, hate and hope.

The Last Emperor

Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci

The last Chinese emperor Pu Yi, who was made emperor at the age of four, struggles to survive cataclysmic changes. The beauty of the movie lies in the on-site shooting in the magnificent Forbidden City.

Not One Less

Directed by Zhang Yimou

A young village girl is brought to a small village to be the substitute teacher for a month and must ensure that no student leaves. When one student leaves for the city to look for work she heads off to find him and her adventure begins.