, THE ALA GUIDE TO RESEARCHING MODERN CHINA 7

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The ALA Guide to Researching Modern ** CHINA

美国图书馆协会 现代中国研究指南

Yunshan Ye

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Yunshan Ye is the academic liaison librarian for anthropology, East Asian studies, and political science at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. He is also serving as chair of humanities on the Collection Development Council of the Sheridan Libraries and Museums of Johns Hopkins University and is editor-in-chief of the *CALA Occasional Paper Series*, a peerreviewed journal published by the Chinese American Librarian Association (CALA). Both on local and national levels, Mr. Ye has taught workshops for scholars and librarians on the topic of researching modern China. This book project won the Carnegie-Whitney Award from the American Library Association in 2008. Mr. Ye earned his master's degree in education at Calvin College, Michigan, and master's degrees in comparative literature and library science at the University of Iowa.

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To Caiyun, Joanna, Julia, and Jamie, with love

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Although the content and scope of the project has evolved a great deal during the process of research and writing over the past four years, the primary goal has remained the same: to fill in a critical gap in the existing reference resources on China Studies. This guide is intended to address the changing landscape of scholarly research, especially the predominant role of digital resources, and does not merely list resources but also teaches critical information literacy concepts and skills in the field.

The spectacular economic growth in China in the past decade has generated tremendous interest in the country and drives rapid expansion of China Studies in Western academia, particularly in the United States. Nearly all US colleges and universities now include China-related courses in their curricula, and up to 400 institutions offer degree programs in China Studies or closely related fields (Macmillan Reference USA 2007). Not only does the field continue to expand and grow in large research centers and universities—traditional strongholds for scholarship on China—it has also gradually over the past few decades become a significant presence in many primarily undergraduate institutions. For example, most liberal arts colleges, fueled by popular demand and generous support of charitable foundations (such as the Freeman Foundation), now embrace the study of China or East Asia as a critical strategy to prepare their students for future leadership in the globalizing world (Clancy 2012). Recently, China Studies has even entered the field of secondary education. Recognizing the strategic importance of China in the future US economy, many high schools are now offering Chinese-language courses, some even going as far as mandating Chinese courses for public school systems (Yamashita 2000).

While a record number of students are entering or interested in the field of China Studies, there has been no published reference work to date that can provide a proper introduction to the rich research resources now available for Chinese studies. For example, a preliminary study using WorldCat shows that out of the 21 existing research guides for China Studies, 12 of them were published prior to 1979 (hence outdated); another three were highly specialized, focusing on very specific topics (such as Sung history); and the remaining six were bibliographies clearly intended for advanced students of China Studies that would not be useful for beginners. More important, none of the works covered electronic resources.

In addition, most of the existing reference works are devoted to the study of premodern Chinese literature, philosophy, and culture. The focus of China Studies as a field, however, has shifted onto modern and contemporary China (see chapter 1 for details). It is common nowadays to find students in China or Asian Studies also double-majored in business, international studies, political science, or other fields of study, with the intention of pursuing future business, government, or NGO careers in connection with China. For this reason, most China Studies curricula now focus on modern and contemporary China, covering not only subjects in humanities but also, perhaps more important, those in social sciences.

In short, the existing reference resources published to date are inadequate to reflect the changing field of China Studies, both in terms of the reality of today's academic research in the digital age and also in light of the growing diverse population of today's China researchers, which encompasses not only scholars and advanced students in graduate schools but also undergraduate and even high school students, people working in private businesses or government agencies, and virtually anyone who may or may not be a China specialist but who needs to conduct research on China. For this reason, the first and foremost goal of this book is to create a high-quality, upto-date, and practical reference work that guides researchers of all levels to the most important research resources in the field of Modern China Studies. Rather than trying to make a comprehensive list of all the resources available (an impossible task given the explosion of information related to China), the book focuses on the most crucial resources, particularly those in digital format, that are commonly accessible in academic institutions and likely to be useful for any China researcher. At the same time, the book tries to teach the basic concepts and skills of academic research so that the reader can apply the same knowledge and skills to the use of other research resources and tools that are not covered in this book, thereby improving his or her research skills.

Specifically, the book begins with some contextual information about China and Modern China Studies that is intended for those who are new to the field. The contextual information includes basic facts about China and a chronology that covers more than 3,000 years of Chinese history, from around 1000 BC to the present, highlighting the most significant historical and cultural figures and events. It also includes a full chapter coverage (chapter 1) of the history of Modern China Studies as an academic field to show how the field has evolved over the years.

The main body of the book, chapters 2 through 15, is devoted to detailed discussions on researching modern China with the most vital research resources in the field. Chapter 2 covers some of the fundamental concepts about library research. They are the building blocks for later discussions on research resources and strategies. Chapters 3 through 9 cover different types of resources, including reference works, books, articles, and various types of primary sources. The resources and tools covered in these chapters can be used for research in all disciplines in humanities and social sciences. Chapters 10 through 15 take a different approach by focusing on research resources specific to disciplines. Each chapter covers specialized resources, both in print and online, for some of the major subject fields in humanities and social sciences. Again, to benefit readers of different levels, I have included both resources that are for advanced scholars and those intended for beginning researchers. And finally, the appendix sections include information that librarians may find useful, such as different ways to acquire Chinese-language materials, including print books, DVDs, and electronic resources that are currently available on the market.

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MODERN CHINA

Basic Facts and Figures



Map of the People's Republic of China

Government

Official name: People's Republic of China (*Zhong hua ren min gong he guo*)
Form of government: Single-party (China's Communist Party) rule with one legislative house (National People's Congress)
Chief of state: President
Head of government: Premier
Capital: Beijing (Peking)
Official language: Mandarin Chinese (*Putonghua*)
Official religion: None
Monetary unit: 1 renminbi yuan

Independence

The People's Republic of China was established on October 1, 1949. Notable earlier dates include first unification under the Qin (Ch'in) Dynasty, 221 BC; Qing (Ch'ing or Manchu) Dynasty replaced by a republic on February 12, 1912, marking the end of China's 2,000-year dynastic period.

Geography

- **Total area:** 9,596,960 square kilometers. China is the fourth largest country in the world, following Russia, Canada, and the United States.
- **Cities:** Beijing, the capital city, is located in northeast China; other major cities include Tianjin, Shenyang in the northeast, Shanghai and Nanjing in the southeast, Guangzhou and Hong Kong in the south, Chengdu and Chongqin in the southwest, and Wuhan in central China.
- **Terrain:** China's vast terrain includes plains, deltas, and hills in the east and mountains, high plateaus, and deserts in west.
- **Climate:** China has a wide range of climate from tropical in the south to subarctic in the north.

Demography

Population (2012 est.): 1,343,239,923 **Population growth** (annual average, 2002–2012): 0.54%

CHINESE HISTORY AND CULTURE

A Chronology

Traditional China

1046–206 BC, the Zhou and Qin Dynasties

- Confucius (ca. 551–479 BC) edited the *Classics*. His teachings, recorded in the *Analects*, became the philosophical foundation of the Chinese civilization.
- Qin unified various kingdoms of China in 211 BC. Its king claimed the title of "First Sovereign Emperor," Shihuangdi. The excavation of Shihuangdi's tomb, near today's city of Xi'an, revealed more than 6,000 life-size terracotta warriors. Between 220 and 206 BC, Shihuangdi built the Great Wall. Much of what is left today of the Great Wall, however, was rebuilt during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644).

206 BC-AD 220, Han Dynasty

• Confucianism was adopted as an official ideology to provide universally accepted norms, morals, and ritual and social behavior.

AD 220–581, the Six Dynasties

• By the end of the second century, the rule of the Han Dynasty gradually fell into disarray and China entered a prolonged period of internal divisions, such as the Three Kingdoms (AD 220–280), and external invasions, such as the Sixteen Kingdoms (AD 303–439), a period filled with political strife, diplomatic intrigue, and bloody warfare.



Historical Overview of Modern China Studies in the United States

This chapter will show you:

- ★ The evolution of the field of China Studies since the nineteenth century
- ★ The effect of accessibility of information on China Studies scholarship

We can trace the beginning of China Studies in the United States back to the work of missionaries in the nineteenth century. American missionaries started to arrive in China around the middle of the nineteenth century. Some of the missionaries spent decades living in China and produced a large amount of literature about China, in the form of newsletters, diaries, personal letters, and memoirs. Some of the missionaries compiled dictionaries and published introductory books about Chinese history, culture, and people. Thanks to these materials, people in the United States for the first time in history started to have some idea about the real China, instead of just envisioning some remote, mysterious place on the other side of the earth. These publications also laid the foundation for later China Studies scholarship, and they continue to be interesting to scholars even today because they record and bear witness to the most significant changes in Chinese history, such as the collapse of the centuries-old dynastic system and the first encounters between China and the West.

While the missionary materials are valuable historical accounts of what life in China was like at that time, they can also be very much biased. For example, Samuel Wells Williams, a missionary who had spent 43 years in China, wrote in his influential work, *The Middle Kingdom* (1883):

The Chinese would be found to have attained, it is believed, a higher position in general security of life and property, and in arts of domestic life and comfort among the mass, and a greater degree of general literary intelligence, than any other heathen or Mohammedan nation that ever existed.... They have, however, probably done all they can do, reached as high point as they can without the Gospel; and its introduction, with its attendant influences, will erelong change their political and social system. (Williams 1883, 1:48)

One can argue that there is an implied justification for Western (at least cultural) imperialism.

We can easily find similar biases in another major work by an American missionary, Arthur Smith, titled Chinese Characteristics (1894). Smith was born in 1845 in Vernon, Connecticut, to a middle-class family with a strong religious background. His missionary work took him and his family to a small village in Shandong Province in 1872, where Smith spent many decades preaching to the poorest in the village society. One would think that his book would give a more or less realistic account of what Chinese people were like. Reading it today, however, one cannot but see blatant racism throughout his book. For example, chapter 11 of the book is titled "The Absence of Nerves," which the author claimed was one of the characteristics that he had observed in Chinese people. Basically, he claimed that from his "observations" he had found that Chinese people had no nerve system in their bodies and so could endure any kind of pain. Historically speaking, Smith did not make this claim out of the blue. There was an influential book at the time titled American Nervousness by a Dr. George Beard (1881). In that book, Beard claimed that "civilized" people such as Europeans and white Americans had more advanced nervous systems than "less-civilized" people such as blacks. It is likely Smith had read that book, because in his own book he contributed to this infamous theory by saying that the Chinese had no nerves at all. The implication was that the Chinese were uncivilized and therefore an inferior race to white Americans. Smith's book later became tremendously popular in the Western world. A lot of Western racist stereotypes of the Chinese that exist today can be traced back to this book. This book also became very popular in Japan when it was translated and published in 1897. The Japanese used this book to justify their

imperialist ambition as the hegemonic power of East Asia and their claim to being a superior race to the Chinese, something equivalent to the "whites" of Asia (Lui 2002). In short, due to their obvious prejudice, missionary works in the nineteenth century contributed as much to the myth as to any real understanding of China.

The academic interest in China started to grow in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century. A Chinese scholar who visited the United States in the early part of the twentieth century, Kiang Kanghu, wrote a book titled *On Chinese Studies* (1934). The book describes the field of China Studies in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century:

When I first came to America in 1914, there were only two universities having Chinese departments, namely, Columbia University and the University of California. The Library of Congress had in its Chinese Division only the gifts of the Chinese government and other small private collections. Since my last visit in 1927, during the last four years, there have been instituted about 300 Chinese courses at over 100 universities and colleges. The Library of Congress has special appropriation for the purchase of Chinese books and has now approximately 150,000 volumes. (Kiang 1934, xx)

China Studies at the time was dominated by what we call Sinology, which literally means "examination of Chinese texts." US scholars tended to follow the French school of Sinology and used philology and translation as primary methods in their study of China. They focused on the textual studies of the Chinese classics (mostly philosophy and literature) and sought to uncover the fundamental principles of Chinese civilization. Because of their preoccupation with premodern classics and the philological approach, early sinologists largely ignored what was going on in contemporary China. Without solid scholarship providing up-to-date and objective analysis of China, the overall understanding of China in the United States remained shallow. The situation was ridiculed by a European scholar in 1912:

Sinology without knowledge of Chinese thrives particularly well also in the United States. It is strong in the magazines, but also abounds especially in the daily press. Information is imparted with the rapidity of the telegraph on the most complicated and profound secrets of the political, economic and social life of the Middle Kingdom—but the sources of this omniscience

unfortunately, as a rule, are only from the bars of the foreign clubs in Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong. (Dorsey 1912)

World War II had a tremendous impact on the field of China Studies. The war brought the East and West into closer contact, and consequently the East was no longer a remote mystery but something more tangible and real. There was a sense of urgency in the United States on the part of both the government and general public to know what was really going on in that part of the world. The books on Sinology proved inadequate in meeting this demand, as Mortimer Graves said in 1937:

As I see it, we have in the study of China, Japan, India, the USSR, and the Arabic world to create a new (American) attitude, and probably new techniques; we cannot borrow either from academic learning of the 19th century.... For in dealing with these newer civilizations we are not dealing with dead ones, but on the contrary with civilizations that are very much alive...we have to participate, and that means to know what the Orientals are doing and try to do it with them. (Zurndorfer 1995, 34)

Because of this change in attitude, the US academia during the Cold War saw the rise of "area studies," which Schwartz (1980, 15) defined as "an enterprise designed to achieve an encapsulated understanding of the unknown areas of the world in which we suddenly found ourselves engaged." The consequence for China Studies was the creation of Modern China Studies at Harvard in 1946, largely as a result of the persistence and leadership of John Fairbank. What distinguishes the Harvard Modern China Studies program from early Sinology is that the Harvard program combined language with a disciplinary approach, especially social sciences such as history, anthropology, and sociology, to the region where the language was spoken, in contrast to a sinologist's central concern on language itself. Fairbank justifies his new approach this way: "For historians, the problem is to use the language rather than be used by it" (Zurndorfer 1995, 35). The Harvard program clearly marked a breakaway from traditional Sinology and redefined the entire field of China Studies. Now when we talk about China Studies, we are mainly referring to this particular type of disciplinary approach in which problems of Modern China are examined under the light of theories of modern disciplines.

The years between the 1950s and 1970s saw fast growth in the field, thanks to a large infusion of funds from the federal government and private foundations. Millions of dollars were given to institutions of higher education in support of China Studies during the period (Ford Foundation alone donated \$30 million). On the one hand, China Studies thrived because of this generous funding; on the other hand, China Studies as a field soon became a target of criticism from scholars both inside and outside the field. For scholars in mainstream disciplines, China Studies was ridiculed as a "nondiscipline," meaning that scholarship in China Studies was too narrowly focused on China and failed to address larger, more general theoretical problems. There was to this point very little dialog between China scholars and their colleagues in mainstream disciplines. After assessing the state of Modern China Studies in the United States up to 1980, Ramon Myers and Thomas Metzger (1980) came to the sobering conclusion: "Between 1958 and 1970 nearly \$41 million was poured into our institutions of higher education in support of Chinese studies. Has this investment paid off to produce high quality scholarship and a corps of reliable China experts? No." Myers and Metzger attribute what they perceived as the failure of China Studies scholarship in the United States to US scholars' lack of adequate language skills, restrictive compartmentalized training, lack of deep understanding and appreciation of China's intellectual and political traditions, and so forth.

While all this may be true, we may also add that little or no access to quality information contributed, to a significant degree, to the general malaise of the field during those early years. During the decades between 1949, when the Communist Party took over China, and 1979, when Deng Xiaoping emerged as China's paramount leader and initiated a sweeping economic reform that would change China forever, the country was shrouded in deep mystery and seemingly impenetrable insulation. There was very little information accessible to Western scholars, making it extremely difficult to conduct scholarly research. Andrew Walder of Stanford University thus describes his experience of coping with the paucity of information as a China Studies scholar in the 1970s:

Few Chinese citizens could travel abroad; U.S. citizens could not freely travel to China. Research by foreigners was impossible; collaborative research was out of the question; scholarly exchanges had yet to begin. The country's publishing industry had yet to recover from the effects of the Cultural Revolution; only a handful of leading national party newspapers could be obtained abroad; even regional and local party newspapers were off limits to foreigners and were scarce. Government documents that found their way outside China through obscure means were pored over by scholars; the open press was painstakingly read and analyzed; English-language transcriptions of radio broadcasts published by the BBC World Service and the U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service were important sources. Interviews of émigrés in Hong Kong was a major component of one's "field" research... almost none of us had ever been to the People's Republic of China. (Walder 2002)

Another China Studies scholar, Harry Harding, describes the crippling effect of the lack of information on the quality of scholarship:

Limited access to information and the relatively tight controls over Chinese society severely handicapped many areas of American research on contemporary China during this period. There was little work in the humanities.... Anthropology languished from the lack of opportunities to conduct field work in China.... Economics was hampered by the enormous effort required to compile and reconstruct official data so as to obtain reliable statistics on China's industrial and agricultural performance. (Harding 1984)

Without high-quality information, it was impossible for China Studies scholars to apply the rigorous standards required by disciplines in social sciences to the field of China Studies. As a result, they had to content themselves with gathering facts about China and sharing them with a relatively small and tightly knit community of scholars interested in China. Most of the scholarship was published in *The China Quarterly*, which had become the center of this scholarly community. Because of its scarcity, any information could benefit anyone in the community regardless of discipline. Therefore, there were very little disciplinary boundaries in China Studies at the time, hence the label "nondiscipline."

Dramatic changes have taken place since the 1980s. With the normalization of China–US relations and China's open-door policy, travelling to China and gathering firsthand data are no longer a problem. Easy access to information has led to a new kind of scholarship: China Studies scholarship is no longer confined to China alone but tends to frame itself as part of a disciplinary dialog. Its use of theory and methodology is now recognized as part of mainstream scholarship in the discipline. China Studies scholarship starts to go beyond China-specialized journals, such as *The China Quarterly* and *Modern China*, and gets published in US mainstream discipline-based journals. For example, the *American Journal of Sociology* and *American Sociological Review* published no articles on China between 1978 and 1987, five between 1988 and 1992, 15 between 1992 and 1997, and 16 between 1999 and 2003. Similar trends can be seen in other social science fields like political science and economics. This implies that China Studies is finally coming out of the narrow confines of traditional area studies and merging into mainstream scholarship based on individual disciplines. In other words, China Studies now is clearly an interdisciplinary field, with different disciplinary approaches all contributing to a broad understanding of what is going on in China.

Spectacular economic growth in the past decades has brought China to the center of the global community. It has generated tremendous interest in the region and drives rapid expansion of China Studies in the United States. With the thriving of China Studies here, we have also seen much greater interaction between scholars in China and the United States. Besides visiting and collaborating scholars, more and more US students, the future generation of China Studies scholars, are coming to study in China. Between 1979 and 1983, there were about 3,500 US students studying in China; by 2001, the number rose to 50,000. The number of Chinese scholars and students coming to study in the United States has also increased dramatically. In 1978, there were about 50 students from China; by 2009, the number mushroomed to 127,628. Now China has become the leading country to send students to America (Institute of International Education 2012). The increasing number of students studying in the two countries will undoubtedly contribute to more interaction and collaboration between Chinese and US scholars.

Another significant change is that the quality of China Studies scholarship has much improved, both in the United States and in China. In this country, a great number of Chinese students choose to stay after finishing their graduate training and join the China Studies community here. Because they do not have the language and cultural barriers that plagued early China Studies scholars, these China-born scholars are playing an increasingly important role in the China Studies field. At the same time, there are also a large number of Chinese students who choose to return home upon graduation, and many of them become leaders in their fields in China. They channel what they have learned from the United States to the classrooms and scholarly publications in China and help train and nurture new generations of scholars in China. Compared to the older generations of Chinese scholars (such as in the 1950s up to the early 1980s), this new generation of scholars is much better informed. They are well versed in the latest Western theories and well aware of cutting-edge research in their fields. They have overcome the political and ideological barriers that isolated the older generation of Chinese scholars and are fully equipped to engage their Western colleagues in scholarly dialog. As a result, the overall quality of scholarship in China has greatly improved. The implication for China Studies researchers today is that in order to do complete and thorough research on a China-related issue, we can no longer rely on English-language sources alone but have to expand our search to sources from China, including both primary and secondary sources.

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