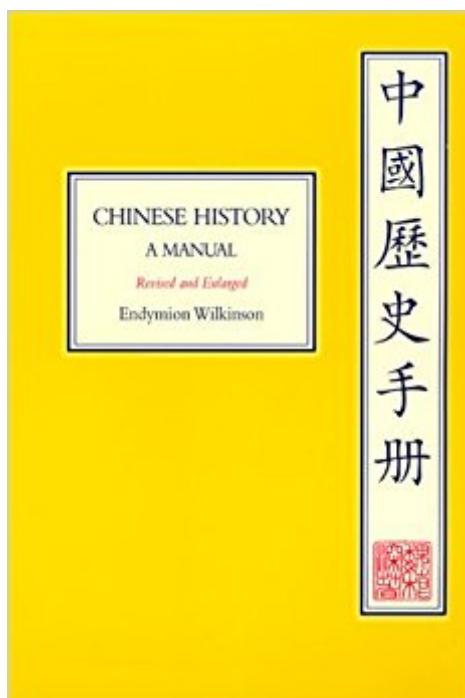


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# Chinese History: A Manual, Revised And Enlarged



## **Synopsis**

Since publication of the first edition in 1998, Chinese History: A Manual has become an indispensable guide to researching the civilization and history of China. Updated through January 2000, the second edition discusses some 4,300 primary, secondary, and reference works, an increase of 1,500 titles over the first edition. The temporal coverage has been expanded to include the Republican period; sections on nonverbal salutations, weights and measures, money, and furniture have been added; the chapters on language, etymology, people, geography, chronology, warfare, leishu, food, and the Chinese world order have been thoroughly revised; and the subject index has been enlarged to include 2,500 technical terms.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The content of this book is extremely rich. One has to admire the effort and ability the author has shown in tracing down some of the obscure publications from less well-known publishers. This book will doubtless become the essential buyers' guide for every librarian of sinology for months to come! --Wang Tao (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society)Endymion Wilkinson has created an extremely useful navigational guide in English to the vast ocean of China's long traditional civilization. Because of its many strong points it can be considered one of a kind, a unique work...There are numerous points that distinguish this manual as a work of the first rank, a

collection that will be utilized and referenced by scholars for decades to come. --Ronald Suleski  
(China Review International)

Text: English, Chinese --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have a BA in History, but am by no means a professional historian. I used this book as a high level introduction to the major topics in Chinese history, and a "next step" guide for finding additional reading. It is a fantastic addition to anyone's library.

Wilkinson's 'Chinese History: A Manual' is an essential volume on the bookshelf of any serious Chinese historiographer or scholar of Chinese history. Since the publication of the first edition, this book has very much become a standard reference for Chinese history. Note, though, that this is not a textbook on Chinese history, although one can certainly learn a great deal about Chinese history from it. It serves better as a handbook on Chinese history, an informative reference one consults to discover resources for the study of divers aspects of Chinese history. The first section provides an excellent introduction to Chinese history, and the methods of Chinese historiography. Topics such as language, geography, demography, chronology, statistics, etc., are introduced, and reference works such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias are discussed in some detail. This section provides much of the groundwork necessary for study of Chinese history. The remainder of the book is devoted to the description of the primary and secondary sources of historical documents, categorising them by genre, era and topic. Some 4,300 sources and references are described, from pre-Qin periods to the modern era, making the book an excellent first-port-of-call for identifying historical texts and documents. Wilkinson's work is especially helpful because the resources are not merely presented as lists, but their context is described, and often, some evaluation of the quality, worth, reliability, ubiquity, etc., is presented. Difficulties and obstacles encountered in research are mentioned, and solutions are often suggested. This is a revised version of the 1998 edition, enlarged to include republican period. An already excellent manual was improved upon, and there is little I can say to criticise this edition. The book is physically well bound and the print is clear and of a good size: no magnifying glass is necessary. One particularly laudable feature of this book is that where English is employed for terms particular to Chinese culture or history, the Chinese term is given throughout, and the name of texts and sources are always given in Chinese. Moreover, romanisation is generally accompanied by Chinese characters, eliminating the often frustrating guesswork involved in trying to figure out the characters corresponding to a romanised phrase. My

only complaint is that, although Pinyin romanisation is used consistently, the tone marks are generally omitted. In short, then, I have nothing but praise for Wilkinson's work. It is an indispensable guide to the study of Chinese historiography, and constitutes an excellent resource for anyone at all interested in Chinese history. Although written as a handbook for research, I have found the book suited to casual browse, and I often use it as a coffee-book table: I open it to a random page, and, more often than not, I find something that strikes my fancy and piques my interest. All in all, this book is a valuable resource seldom to be met with elsewhere.

This is an annotated research guide and bibliography, as described by the publisher, but has much more: introductions to the sources available for the writing of traditional Chinese history (up to 1911); shrewd evaluations of reference and research tools involved; explanation of how the study of the field developed; brief summaries of the state of research on a wide variety of topics, including: origins of Chinese characters, history of Chinese food, how to handle dates and chronology; how to find out where places are and who people are... well, you get the idea. The MANUAL is useful not only for primary research, but also for finding articles and secondary references on many topics (my own bibliography, CHINA (Clio: World Bibliography Series, 1997) lists mainly books). The term "Manual" in Wilkinson's title really describes it, i.e. something which must be "at hand" for anyone working in Chinese history, and a "must" for libraries.

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