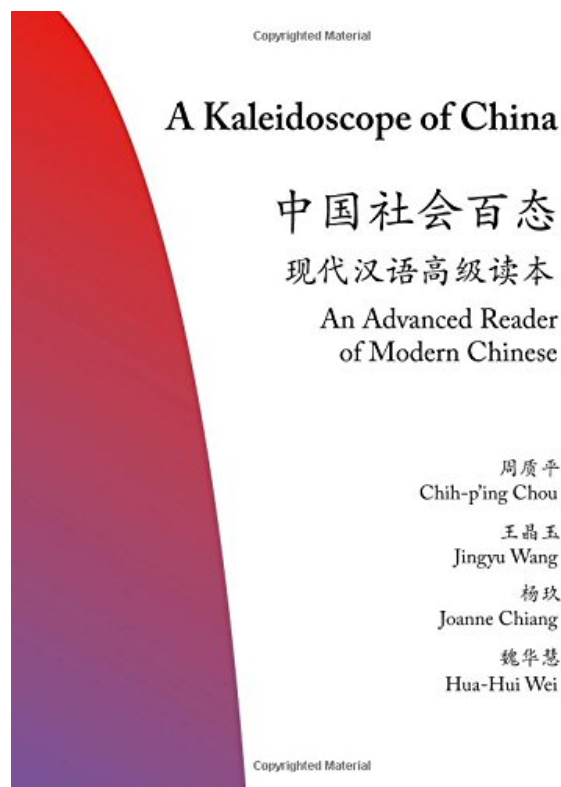


**A KALEIDOSCOPE OF CHINA: AN
ADVANCED READER OF MODERN CHINESE
(THE PRINCETON LANGUAGE PROGRAM:
MODERN CHINESE) BY CHIH-P'ING CHOU,
JUNGYU**



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A Kaleidoscope of China

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现代汉语高级读本

An Advanced Reader
of Modern Chinese

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"Chou and his colleagues have once again produced a superb Chinese language textbook. This crack team of seasoned teachers is probably the best in the world when it comes to teaching Chinese as a second language. A Kaleidoscope of China presents a veritable feast of fascinating essays. Students will not only find it stimulating but, more importantly, will learn well from it."--James M. Hargett, University at Albany, State University of New York

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A Kaleidoscope of China is an advanced Chinese-language textbook that gives students a greater command of Chinese while deepening their understanding of the social and cultural issues facing China today. Geared to the unique needs of students with two or more years of instruction in modern Chinese, this book features a stimulating selection of articles and essays from major newspapers and periodicals in China, offering a revealing look at contemporary Chinese society. Topics include: buying a home versus having a child; consumer exports to America; depression; online dating; cell phones; empty-nest syndrome; fast food; the Virginia Tech massacre; medicine; the 2008 Sichuan earthquake; and global warming. Every selection is accompanied by a vocabulary list, exercises, and grammar notes.

No other Chinese-language textbook so effectively helps advanced students expand their language skills while immersing them in what is truly a kaleidoscope of today's China.

- Teaches advanced Chinese while providing a window into contemporary China
- Features selections from actual Chinese newspapers and periodicals
- Includes vocabulary lists, exercises, and grammar notes
- Ideal for students with two or more years of instruction in modern Chinese

- Sales Rank: #613199 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Princeton University Press
- Published on: 2010-06-06
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.90" h x 1.20" w x 8.40" l, 2.70 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 536 pages

Features

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Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Frustrating for Traditionalists

By TE\$\$

First off, this textbook has interesting articles taken from major newspapers and magazines in China. The content is not the issue I have with this book.

However, if you are learning traditional characters you will be a little frustrated. The grammar explanations and the practice sections are all simplified. My professors chose this book so I didn't have a say in the matter. My tests and other class material are written in simplified, BUT I am expected to do all my homework, essays, ppt presentations, and tests in traditional bc I have been doing it now for five semesters. I need more contact with traditional and less with simplified if you get my drift.

Even though the grammar and practice sections are only in simplified, the actual articles and vocab lists are in traditional. Despite this, the font makes it hard to determine what the characters looks like. The font is really ugly!! Of course, I use Pleco and Skritter to figure them out, but it adds to my work load.

On top of the lack of traditional translations, there are a few traditional character mistakes. For example, pg. 113 baibantengai and yilai have not been written in traditional. I can correct it bc I know what they should look like. Also, pg. 35 jue should have three water droplets not two so it needs to be fixed for traditional. My mainland teachers marked me off for it because they don't know any better. So frustrating!!! This is picky, but guo as in jingguo (pg 115) is written in what i call the lazy man's style so please fix that, too. There are more mistakes, but really it's not my job to point them out to native speakers.

I feel that for \$50 the authors could have done a much better job giving equal priority to traditional learners. It's Princeton for goodness sake!! Please hire someone from Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Macau to check your traditional characters!! It seems you have authors who should know traditional, but none of them caught these errors. Sloppy work!

P.S. If you write simplified characters, then this book will be fine for you.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

A Reader of People's Daily Articles with Accompanying Vocabulary Lists

By Daniel Cole

I used this text as part of an intensive summer program. My program covered approximately 16 of the book's 36 chapters. The texts are mostly drawn from newspapers, very often from the People's Daily and deal with issues that were appearing in the period roughly from 2005 to 2008. One of this book's strengths is the variety of topics covered by the articles. While some topics resurface occasionally, students can expect to be

exposed to many different types of vocabulary. Articles that I studied dealt with the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, how cell phones are changing the way that we interact, and rural-urban inequality in China. Studying such a wide range of topics will give students the ability to access different kinds of material later and hopefully the ability to discuss many different types of topics.

Since the texts are drawn mostly from mainland Chinese newspapers, there is nothing so incendiary in content that it would prevent this book from being used in study abroad programs in mainland China or that it might raise eyebrows in Chinese departments in the US. In addition to learning what issues were important to Chinese authorities during that period covered by the texts, students of Chinese using this book will also learn the sort of discourse that is used in the People's Daily. A revelation to me was how both spiritual and material civilization (wenming) could be described as necessary to address China's public toilet problems.

My initial impression using the book was that the level is pitched a bit too high for the target learner group, third- or fourth-year Chinese students. Students are presumably making a big jump into formal Chinese around this level. The way this book deals with that is by accompanying each text with a huge list of vocabulary, often numbering around 75 items. Grammar explanations and supplementary exercises are minimal, usually limited to about two pages in total. This can all be seen in Amazon's book preview. It would be nice to have a little more instruction on differences between informal and formal Chinese. Authors of Chinese textbooks should note that while students may develop a sense for formality in Chinese, the level of formality for each word or structure is not always obvious, especially for students who have had little exposure to Chinese outside the classroom.

For the minority of students who insist on studying the complex set of characters, among whom I count myself, each chapter does have a traditional character version of the text. As another reviewer mentioned, there are occasional typos both in the vocabulary lists and in the texts, so it is important to verify that traditional characters are written correctly.

I would generally not recommend this book for self study unless the student is already well into the advanced level (e.g. already finished with a Chinese major or the equivalent) and is looking for reading practice. For other students, a very good teacher could make this book interesting.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

MP3 version would be useful

By mmspear

This is an excellent reader, with informative and useful articles on modern day Chinese life. However, an included MP3 version of the textbook would be extremely useful for students who are not already fluent.

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