

MEDIA RESOURCES

New Online Sources for Teaching and Research in Asian Studies

Susanne Alway, Editor
Adam Matthew Digital

Editors' Note: This new online British resource appears particularly promising as a tool for ASIANetwork members. We have invited Susan Alway, the In-House Editor of the project, to contribute the following article by way of introduction to the resources.

Since its inception, Adam Matthew Digital has been striving to provide significant and useful digital resources for teaching and research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Flagship projects such as **Empire Online** (looking at the rise and fall of the British Empire), **Everyday Life and Women in America** and **Mass Observation Online** have already reached a wide audience, and have been adopted as teaching resources at many universities worldwide.

Always keen to develop specific resources for Asian Studies, we undertook meetings with librarians and academics in the field and listened to their requests. As a result we have created **China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980** to fulfill a clear need for a wide ranging English language resource that not only spanned this period of great change in China, but also allowed students to perform their own detailed academic research using original historical documents.

We have been guided by the many discussions that we have had, and also by an excellent panel of consultant editors, who are experts in their field. Professor Robert Bickers of Bristol University, Professor Richard Horowitz of California State University Northridge, and Dr Wong

Man Kong of Hong Kong Baptist University have each provided us with valuable insights regarding key original sources, teaching trends and requirements, and are providing substantive supporting essays to show ways in which the material can be approached.

Professor Bickers has noted that “we cannot understand the contemporary world unless we understand China, and we cannot understand contemporary China unless we understand its past”. **China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980** goes a long way toward facilitating this understanding. It is brimming with images

sources illustrate, through manuscript reports, diaries, letters and eye-witness accounts, events from the fateful Macartney Embassy episode of 1793 through to the birth and early years of the PRC. There are wonderful sources for social and cultural history, political history and the history of trade.

Key documents relating to the Chinese Maritime customs service, from the recollections of Robert Hart to Frederick Maze, are accessible and searchable alongside diaries, logbooks, illustrations and original reports of diplomats, missionaries and businessmen.

There are letters relating to the first opium war, survivors' descriptions of the Boxer Rebellion, and tantalising glimpses of life in China from the collected diaries and personal photographs of the Bowra family.

A fully searchable run of the missionary journal *The Chinese Recorder* describes life in China from 1867-1941, while official government files from the National Archives track postwar trade between Britain and China and give accounts of the Nixon and Heath visits to China and the

thawing of East-West relations. Further Foreign Office records and papers of individuals such as Rewi Alley provide contrasting views of life in the PRC.

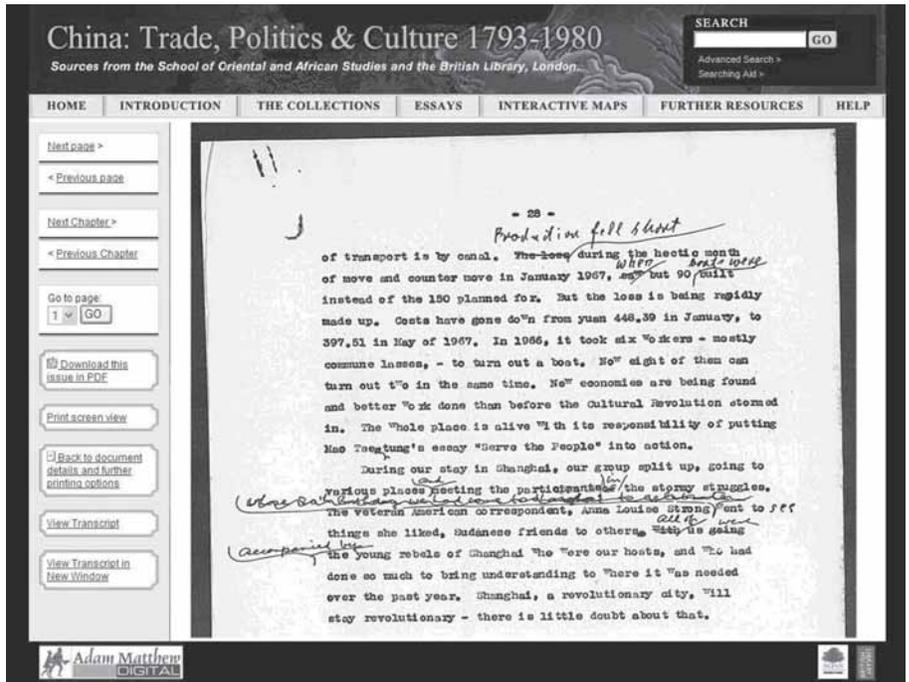
All of the material has been carefully indexed and all of the printed items have been double-keyed and are fully searchable. Over 400 colour paintings, maps and drawings by English and Chinese



of original source documents from libraries and archives across the world, principally from the School of Oriental and African Studies and the British Library, London, but also from the Cambridge University Library, the Church Missionary Society, Duke University, the National Archives at Kew, the National Library of New Zealand and the Yale Divinity Library. These

artists, as well as photographs, sketches and ephemeral items provide a striking visual accompaniment to these documentary sources. A comprehensive list of contents can be found on our website, www.amdigital.co.uk

Creating a digital resource is a lengthy process, requiring care and attention to detail—and a real and genuine passion for the project. It is a truly global process, involving input—fittingly—from partners in China, India, Britain and North America. It was wonderful to be able to announce the first details of the project at the recent Association for Asian Studies conference in Boston and to receive so many favourable comments from scholars. The quality of the original documents coupled with an innovative design, extra features such as an interactive map and slideshow, and the undeniable benefits of full text searching, make it an invaluable tool in the field of Asian studies.



China: Trade, Politics and Culture 1793-1980 will be published in September and free one month trials are available to all interested scholars.

2007 CONFERENCE MOMENTS



Dorothy Ko presenting her plenary talk, *Perspectives on Footbinding*

(Photo by Irv Epstein)



Bardwell Smith during keynote address

(Photo by Irv Epstein)



Board of Directors meeting in April

(Photo by Bob Eng)



Audience at panel session: *Ordinary People*

(Photo by Roxie Ransom)



Orientation session for 2007 Student-Faculty Fellows faculty recipients

(Photo by Roxie Ransom)