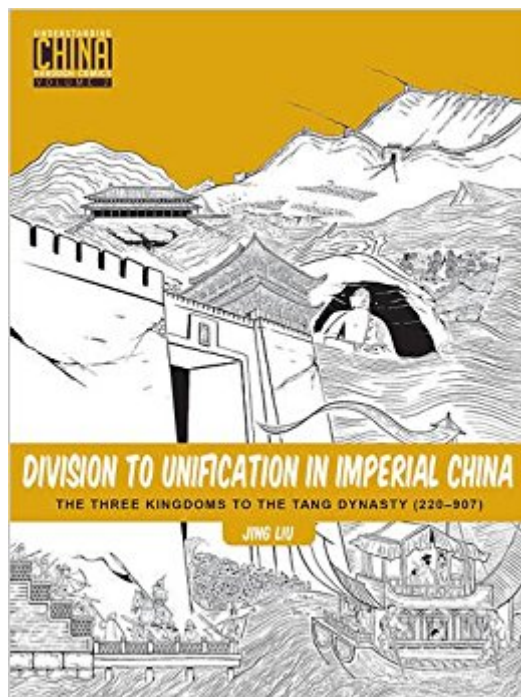




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# Division To Unification In Imperial China: The Three Kingdoms To The Tang Dynasty (220-907) (Understanding China Through Comics)



## Synopsis

Who founded China? Are Chinese people religious? What is Chinese culture and how has it changed over time? The Understanding China Through Comics series answers these questions and more. Division to Unification in Imperial China is series volume two. It explores one of China's more chaotic periods when Chinese culture flourished while civil wars and foreign invasions repeatedly thwarted attempts at unification. A handy timeline is included. Jing Liu is a Beijing native now living in Davis, California. A successful designer and entrepreneur who helped brands tell their stories, Jing currently uses his artistry to tell the story of China.

## Book Information

Series: Understanding China Through Comics (Book 2)

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Age Range: 11 - 17 years

Grade Level: 6 - 12

## Customer Reviews

"A great way to learn about China's vast history!" •Amy Tan, author of The Joy Luck Club"Excels at clarifying the often-confusing transitional periods between dynasties | An excellent introduction to the large trends of early Chinese history." •School Library Journal5/5 Stars "An invaluable source... Chinese history is a vast subject, but Jing Liu has a skillful ability to condense it all into an interesting and manageable narrative." •Kids' Book Buzz"Combines breezy style with historical rigor to strike just the right gong-tone for a middle school audience approaching the vast scope of Chinese history." •Education About Asia"The combination of silhouettes •often threatening, martial

onesâ •with open-faced, expressively individualized figures of many social classes adds dramatic tension while neatly balancing the big-picture narrative. There's a lot to absorb even in this abbreviated form, but the visual approach lightens the load considerably."â •Kirkus Reviews"The lucid, economical text makes one eager for successive volumes."â •Booklist"Simple and effectiveâ [This direct, appealing introduction to the foundations of one of the worldâ™s oldest civilizations is recommended for teens and adults."â •Library Journal"The book does what it says it does: a child will come away with a basic understanding of early Chinese history, what makes the Chinese tick as a people and culture."â •Asian Review of Books"This book is âœThe Magic School Busâ • for those starting to explore Chinese culture."â •Dan Cao, Instructor at Confucius Institute at UC Davis"An excellent history that clearly explains the great (and ordinary) people who have made China what it is and the conflicts and debates that have shaped Chinese history. There is nothing else like it in English or Chinese."â •Alan Baumler, Professor of History at Indiana University of Pennsylvania"No more burying yourself in text-heavy history books to learn about China, this comic-style book manages to be rich in information and bring Chinese history to readers in a more clear, fun, and accessible way than itâ™s ever been done before. Easily integrated into a social studies or Chinese culture curriculum, I canâ™t wait to get a copy for my class."â •Grace Zeng, Chinese Teacher and Middle School Chinese Curriculum Area Leader at International School of Beijing"Jing Liu has brought to life the long and complex early period of Chinese history in this wonderful graphic novel. Foundations of Chinese Civilization is a delight to read; humorous, informative, and truly captivating."â •Alexandra Pearson, Founder of The Bookworm Literary Festival"Since the 1990s, Jing Liu has been entertaining and informing foreigners about China with his cartoons. His new series of comic books is a fun, easy, accessible way to gain a basic understanding of Chinese history and culture."â •Jeremy Goldkorn, Founder of Danwei

Jing Liu is an artist and entrepreneur from Beijing, China. He is currently the Managing Director of Moli Design, a China-based design firm that counts the BBC, MasterCard, The Ford Foundation, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and UNICEF among its many clients. Liu graduated from Beijing University of Technology with undergraduate degrees in industrial design and engineering, and a masters in international economics and trade. Division to Unification in Imperial China is his second book.

I understand that Chinese students drill the details of their 2000+ year history extensively in school. Although I would think this could be a good "refresher" (so many names and years and this book

hits the "big things"), I doubt that anyone who attended school in China is the intended audience. For someone like me, with fairly minimal knowledge or understanding of Chinese history pre-20th century, this series is great. The first book illustrated the concepts and historical periods very clearly, clearly enough that I could remember a lot of it months later--something that wasn't true after reading an ancient Chinese history book. This one is no exception, but is in a way, an even more interesting period of time since some of the great Chinese literature and philosophy comes from this period (Romance of Three Kingdoms, for example, is right here.) The first book--at least the edition I bought--was 8 1/2" x 11. So it was a surprise to see this one in a much smaller format, 6 x 9.. I wondered if it would be able to present the drawings and information in as much detail as the earlier one. To my surprise, opening and reading it, I didn't notice any real differences. There were still all the same kinds of drawings, still large and easy to see and all the writing was still large and easy to read. The organization of the information and the thought and judgement put into what to include and what to leave out is still excellent overall. I felt I learned a lot and would really put the upper age limit as "adult" given the complexity of information. It'll be great when the entire series is complete. Definitely enjoyed these first two and am looking forward to Vol 3 in April. Very helpful.

Jing Liu in his *Understanding China Through Comics* makes learning Chinese history more fun than catching up on great books in the *Classics Illustrated* comic series. In *Division to Unification in Imperial China: The Three Kingdoms to the Tang Dynasty (220-907)* (*Understanding China Through Comics*) we get the second volume in the series. Covering almost 700 years, Liu starts with what he calls "The Age of Division", a particularly fractious time that includes the 3 kingdoms and 6 dynasties, and then moves on to the Sui and Tang dynasties. In addition to the various rulers, wars and rebellions, Liu treats us to various cultural insights surrounding the rise of Buddhism, Taoist thought, the aristocracy and rank, as well as governing styles. The power and pleasure of this book is that Liu makes fantastic use of his illustrations to both underscore points and deliver nuggets of information which would have taken pages of text. He is dealing with a complex subject, which most Americans are totally unfamiliar with. Realizing that, he has parsed China's history into bite size nuggets that reduce the complexity and helps the reader learn. For anyone who is interested in understanding China, without knowing the history, that is an impossible task. Through Liu's book, we can easily learn about the history without feeling overwhelmed. This book is great of children and adults.

I really love this! My husband and most of my children are part chinese, but none of us really know

anything about China or much about Chinese culture. I jumped at the chance to get this book. It is such an engaging book. I like it, but my 14 yr old insisted that I had to give it to her. She immediately commented that she liked the timeline and then got straight to reading. I will be buying the first book and look forward to further books. This will be a great starting point for our family to learn more about their familial culture.

This is a fantastic book series based on a great idea. While the idea of turning history into a "comic-book" like format is not novel, the execution and subject matter choice here make it a singular achievement. Through a series of volumes, the author Jing Liu covers various parts of Chinese History. They recommend this for children in grades 6-12, yet I feel like just about anybody could learn a lot from reading these books. Because volume two covers a particularly complicated period of Chinese history it can at times be a little bit difficult to follow. The author has designed this text so that each section includes an overview before key historical figures are put into that context. So even if you don't get it all the first go, you can always refer back to his timelines and overviews to get a sense of the context of what you are reading. The art is in black and white and is not meant to be flashy. It is designed to keep your interest, which I think it does incredibly well.

**CONCLUSION** This book has really inspired me to learn more about Chinese history. I think it will do the same for all readers, and is a fantastic aid for teachers and parents trying to get younger people interested in the topic.

I am a fairly educated American yet I know absolutely nothing about the history of China. Blank slate here. This is a riveting, fun, mesmerizing stroll through China 220-907. It assumes no prior knowledge and is suitable for anyone of any age. When I was half way through this book I had already ordered Volume 1. I learned more from this book about its subject than any 10 other books combined. It's an absolute delight. Should be required reading world wide. Bravo.

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