“Fences and walls are not necessary. Mostly they are manifestations of superficial thinking.”

How to use these reading guides:
Each chapter reading guide begins with a short introduction that provides background to help you better understand the chapter, and what follows are the important themes, quotes, definitions, & essential questions--sprinkled with important names, places, & events you should know--to guide you.
This first reading guide on Chapter 1, China, provides more detail than subsequent chapters will. It will be your job for Chapters 2 through 8 to note the details you will need in your courses throughout your sophomore, junior, and senior years.
Here are the reading guides for Chapters 1 through 3, China, the United States, and Israel-Palestine.

Chapter 1, China

This chapter presents an overview of modern China’s challenges and priorities both internally (“Domestic Policy”) and in its foreign policy. Marshall describes China as a “multiethnic empire with Chinese characteristics,” and that is important to understand. Multiethnic nations have challenges keeping themselves united, and China has decided its unity will be preserved with a very strong, control-oriented central government run by the only political party allowed in China, the Communist Party. And while it has adopted some elements of capitalism to realize the enormous economic potential of its people and land, the government keeps a very firm hand on its people.

Tim Marshall writes that the Great Wall of China “was built around one simplistic idea: on one side of it was civilization and on the other barbarity” (p. 15-17). Today they have built a new wall, a Great Digital Firewall they call the Golden Shield to protect its people from “such damaging ideas as democracy, free speech, and an unplugged culture.”

We often hear how China is rising and will challenge the United States for global supremacy. That’s true, but it is also true that China is not monolithic. It, like all countries, has problems and challenges, and it is using walls of various sorts to address those problems.

p. 13-14 President Xi Jinping (in China, surnames are placed first) sees it’s his job “to ensure the center holds.” China’s greatest divide: between urban and rural, rich and poor. And President Xi has to bridge that gap.

p. 15-17 The Great Wall of China “was built around one simplistic idea: on one side of it was civilization and on the other barbarity.”

The Han people see themselves as the true Chinese.

p. 17. References are made to the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards, and Chairman Mao

The Cultural Revolution, formally the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, was a sociopolitical movement in China from 1966 until 1976. Launched by Mao Zedong.
Chairman of the Communist Party of China, its stated goal was to preserve Chinese Communism by purging remnants of capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society, and to re-impose Mao Zedong Thought (known outside China as Maoism) as the dominant ideology in the Party. The Revolution marked Mao's return to a position of power after the failures of his Great Leap Forward. The movement paralyzed China politically and damaged its economy and society, and killed an estimated 500,000 to 2,000,000 people.

Red Guards were a mass student-led paramilitary social movement mobilized and guided by Mao Zedong in 1966 and 1967, during the first phase of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, which he had instituted.

The “Four Olds” – Old Customs, Old Culture, Old Habits, Old Ideas –which the Cultural Revolution aimed at destroying

p. 18 Qin Shi Huang founded the Qin Dynasty 221 BCE

p. 19-21 China is intent on squashing separatist (i.e., independence) movements in Xinjiang and Tibet, which Chairman Mao annexed (took over) in western China in the mid-20th century. The Uighurs (pronounced “weeghers”) are Muslims and feel discriminated against economically, socially, and politically. Tibet is Buddhist.

The Communist Party, which runs China, “has learned the lessons of history and knows what happens when the state is weakened by a fragmented population.” –p. 21.

Pages 21-24 provide a history of China from the 1800s through today. Read this carefully.

- Economic inequality splintered the state, weakening it--Japan was able to invade in 1930s and subjugate the people, Mao emerges from World War II intent on suppressing dissent so the new communist government’s power could be maintained.
- Mao succeeded, but he also retarded economic development.
- Deng Xiaoping then gambled and opened China to the outside world in order to improve trade and development. It succeeded.
  - But it’s a “race against the clock.” (p. 23) China has to keep making things and the world has to keep buying those things. This is the lesson of basic economics: you have to keep selling your goods to the outside world. And you do that by keeping your labor cheap so that the goods are inexpensive.
  - Marshall describes this as a “fascinating capitalist version of the old Soviet Communist system.” It has lifted millions of Chinese out of poverty but it has also widened the rich-poor gap between the prosperous coast and poor interior. And that is potentially a big problem.
    - “Zhao and not Zhao” = “the haves and have-nots”

p. 25-30 Challenges Facing China Today

Growing Inequality
“...To get rich is glorious...However, what we [Chinese] mean by getting rich is different from what you mean....To get rich in a socialist society means prosperity for the entire people.”
– Deng Xiaoping

Marshall discusses the economic inequality problem China has.
The top 1% owns 33% of the wealth, & the bottom 25% own 1% of the wealth. This inequality, like China’s prosperity, began with Deng’s opening of China’s economy in 1979.

- **Generations** are also divided
- Migrations – Millions are being moved, west to east, from farms to the cities.
  - P. 26-27 the **Hukou System** – a form of registration that keeps the rural people in a second-class status.
- Beijing also fears growing **regionalism** which would also damage national unity (p. 28)
- While China enforced a **one-child policy** to address overpopulation, an **aging population** is also a problem, as it threatens economic progress. Why does it threaten economic progress?

p. 29-36 China does not have an open internet. Social media is strictly controlled by the government. They have built a firewall – “The Great Firewall of China,” called the **Golden Shield** – to control the flow of information. Make sure you know why & how they have done this (p. 31-32).

p. 36 The last paragraph summarizes how and why China values and enforced **unity**.

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**Chapter 2, USA**

“…a narrow definition of American.”

This chapter analyzes the growing divisions in the United States, symbolized best by the border wall proposed by Donald Trump. The issue is not the wall, which may never be built. It is the disagreement in this country about immigration, & that disagreement includes the volatile topic of race in America. One revolutionary element that the United States’ founders introduced was that the people were united by **shared values**, not by race, religion, or ethnic background. Blood does not make one American, unlike conventional nationalism.

**Donald Trump** is a **nationalist**, and his slogan, “Make America Great Again,” implies the country has lost its greatness because of unpatriotic internationalist values. “Putting America first” is what he says the country must do. Go it alone, negate international trade agreements that encourage free trade with other countries, military alliances like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which the U.S. has led since the end of World War II. These are nationalist qualities, and nationalism, as you will read later in this book, is growing all over the world.

The proposed border wall really is about more than illegal immigration. “The controversy about the wall,” Tim Marshall writes, “gets to the heart of the debate about who gets to define what an ‘American’ means.”

p. 44 The fear among some Americans that the U.S. will no longer be a white-majority country. This is **nativism**, and it’s peaked with Trump’s election.

p. 45-50 This section is an interesting history of the border area between the U.S. and Mexico.

- Two differences between white Americans and Mexicans in this area were over religion and slavery.
- The **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**, 1848
- “The Tortilla Curtain”
p. 51 Obama Administration’s approach to the issue of illegal immigration

Workers are a commodity for sale, like any market, and illegal immigration has been encouraged by American businesses willing to employ and exploit undocumented workers.

p. 52 Two ironies:
1. building a wall will not only keep people from getting in, it will also keep people from getting out, and the border has been porous in both directions for as long as it has existed.
2. Mexico has tougher immigration laws than the U.S. and deports more people than the U.S.

p. 53 Fear of terrorism has influenced U.S. immigration policies, even though 80% of American terrorist incidents have been committed by U.S. citizens.

p. 54-55 Discussion of how a strong economy in Mexico will reduce illegal immigration, but Trump has followed an isolationist policy of withdrawing from international trade agreements like the North American Trade Organization (NAFTA) and military alliances like NATO. The U.S. can do this because it is big enough, but even so it will come at a cost.

p. 55-58 Discussion of the financial costs of building a wall. Cost is very high, but “sometimes symbolism can outweigh practicalities.”

p. 58-62 Discussion of other divisions in the U.S. “A border defines a nation, and Trump’s wall is attempting to define what America is—both physically and ideologically.”

p. 58-60 America’s racial divisions…some white Americans fear the growing Latino/Hispanic population in the U.S.. How would a wall would address this fear?

p. 60-62 Being black in America. Historical and contemporary racism has led to “lower health, lower wealth, lower expectations” among African Americans. The causes are many, but they start with America’s “original sin” of slavery.

p. 62 Religion in the U.S.
p. 62 The tension between assimilation and multiculturalism “…a melting pot? Up to a point.”
Make sure you know what **Identity Politics** is. This is crucial to today’s political life in America.

**Polarization**—*you must pick a side, no moderates in between*—between “left and right,” “liberal and conservative,” “Democrat and Republican,” “urban globalists and non-urban nationalists” (p. 65)

Know what these terms mean.

Some of the younger generation are the most intolerant. Colleges are seeing more radicalization and polarization and less tolerance for other points of view, “reducing the space in the middle.” (p 67)

At one extreme are black and white separatist groups
Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam –

“The racial, ethnic, and political divides all coalesce in this question of the wall—of what the USA is, what it should be, and how it carries forward its ideals of freedom and equality.”

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**Chapter 3, Israel & Palestine**

_The Holy Land is perhaps the hottest of all political flashpoints on earth. No doubt you have heard about the Israelis and the Palestinians in the news, and the sporadic violent clashes between them. You have heard of places like the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, groups like the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Fatah, Hamas, and Hezbollah. It might be pretty confusing._

_This chapter explains and analyzes the current political situation between Israel and Palestine. It will explain how this situation came to be, how the nation of Israel was established in 1948, in the Holy Land, over the opposition of the Palestinian people who lived there. Both peoples’ ancestors haved lived in that region since Antiquity. The Israelis are Jews, whose claim to that land goes back 2,000 years to the Kingdom of Israel-Judah. The Palestinians (so called because the Romans had renamed Judea Syria-Palestina), an Arab people who are mainly Muslims, have occupied these same lands since the 7th century CE adding a sectarian (religious) dimension to the current political conflict._

_There is a large wall, a “separation barrier,” that has been constructed by the Israeli government to protect Israelis from violent acts by armed Palestinian groups some of whom are seeking to recover lands they say the Israelis have taken from them, some seek the destruction of Israel. But there are more fault lines than the one between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Within each group there are differences. The chapter will explain this very complicated part of the world._

p. 73 A “separation barrier” is a 440-mile long stretch of concrete and barbed-wire fencing built by Israel intended to protect Israelis from attacks by Palestinian armed groups who want to recover land that Israel currently occupies.
How this situation came to exist since 1948 is generally explained on pages 75-78, but the **Balfour Declaration** of 1917 played a crucial role in its development.

The **Balfour Declaration** was a public statement issued by the British government in 1917 during World War I announcing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, a region with a minority Jewish population. **Banksy** is an anonymous England-based street artist, vandal, political activist, and film director. His satirical street art and subversive epigrams combine dark humor with graffiti executed in a distinctive stenciling technique.

The Palestinians see the wall as a way for the Israelis to steal their land; the Israelis see the wall as a way to prevent terrorists from killing Israelis.

The **two-state solution** to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict envisages an independent **State of Palestine** alongside the **State of Israel**, west of the Jordan River. The boundary between the two states is still subject to dispute and negotiation, with Palestinian and Arab leadership insisting on the "1967 borders", which is not accepted by Israel. The territory of the former Mandate Palestine (including Jerusalem) which did not form part of the Palestinian State would continue to be part of Israel.

**The Iron Wall** (*We and the Arabs*) is an essay written by Ze'ev Jabotinsky in 1923. It was originally published in Russian. He wrote the essay after the British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill prohibited Zionist settlement on the east bank of the Jordan River, and formed the Zionist Revisionist party after writing it. Jabotinsky argued that the Palestinian Arabs would not agree to a Jewish majority in Palestine, and that "Zionist colonization must either stop, or else proceed regardless of the native population." The only solution to achieve peace and a Jewish state in the Land of Israel, he argued, would be for Jews to first establish a strong Jewish state, which would eventually prompt the Arabs to "drop their extremist leaders, whose watchword is ‘never!’ and pass the leadership to the moderate groups, who will approach us with a proposal that we should both agree to mutual concessions."

This section discusses the “melting pot” that is Israel.

**Ashkenazi Jews** are the Jews of France, Germany, and Eastern Europe and their descendants. Most American Jews today are Ashkenazim, descended from Jews who emigrated from Germany and Eastern Europe from the mid 1800s to the early 1900s. The pages in this site are written from the Ashkenazic Jewish perspective. **Sephardic Jews** are the Jews of Spain, Portugal, North Africa and the Middle East and their descendants. **Haredim Judaism** consists of groups within **Orthodox Judaism** characterized by a strict adherence to their interpretation of Jewish law and values as opposed to modern...
values and practices. Its members are often referred to as strictly Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox in English, although the term "ultra-Orthodox" is considered pejorative by many of its adherents.[3] Haredi Jews regard themselves as the most religiously authentic group of Jews, although this claim is contested by other streams.

p. 86 The one-state solution, sometimes also called a bi-national state, is a proposed approach to resolving the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Proponents of a unified Israel advocate a single state in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with citizenship and equal rights in the combined entity for all inhabitants of all three territories, without regard to ethnicity or religion. Some Israelis advocate another version of the one-state solution in which Israel will annex the West Bank but not the Gaza Strip and remain a Jewish state with a larger Arab minority.

p. 87 Arab citizens of Israel,[3] or Arab Israelis, are Israeli citizens who are Arab. Many Arab citizens of Israel self-identify as Palestinian and commonly self-designate themselves as Palestinian citizens of Israel or Israeli Palestinians.[3][5] According to a 2017 survey, 16% of the Arab population prefers the term "Israeli Arab", while the largest and fastest growing proportion prefers "Palestinian in Israel".

p. 89-96. The Divisions among the Palestinians:

**Fatah**, formerly the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, is a Palestinian nationalist political party and the largest faction of the multi-party Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the second-largest party in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). Politically, it controls the West Bank.

**Hamas** is a Palestinian Sunni-Islamist fundamentalist organization that has a social service wing, Dawah, and a military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades. It has been the de facto governing authority of the Gaza Strip since its takeover of that area in 2007. During this period it fought several wars with Israel. It is regarded, in whole or in part, as a terrorist organization by several countries and international organizations, most notably by Israel, the United States and the European Union. Russia, China, & Turkey do not regard it so.
An *intifada* is a **rebellion or uprising**, or a **resistance movement**. It is a key concept in contemporary Arabic usage referring to a legitimate uprising against oppression. There have been two uprisings by Palestinians against Israel, in 1987-1993 and 2000-2005.