

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AS PRIMARY SOURCES FOR CHINESE HISTORY

Time: Wednesday, 2:00 – 5 PM
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or by appointment

INTRODUCTION

Undergraduate seminars are intended to prepare you for graduate school or professional life by giving you the experience of a graduate seminar without the expectation that you are working at the graduate level. Students lead discussions and produce an original research paper at the end of the quarter.

The subject of our course, archaeological finds as primary sources for Chinese history, is both old and new. Chinese scholars have been interested in Chinese antiquities since at least the Song dynasty (960 – 1279 CE), and have used ancient artifacts in interpreting history. But the recent explosion of archaeological finds in China, related to the country's rapid development, has produced a crisis in Chinese historiography, challenging both the dominant narrative of Chinese history and the hegemony of the text in historical studies. In the seminar we will read a range of works: those that directly deal with Chinese archaeology and those that use archaeological materials to interpret history, religion, art, daily life, and imperial institutions.

Required Texts

Chang Kuang-Chih, *Art, Myth, and Ritual*
Lothar von Falkenhausen, *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius*
Nicola De Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies*
Michael Loewe, *Everyday Life in Early Imperial China*
Michael Loewe, *Faith, Myth and Reason Han China*
Anthony Barbieri-Low, *Artisans in Early Imperial China*
Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs*
Nancy Schatzman Steinhardt, *Chinese Imperial City Planning*
Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion*

Requirements and Assessment Tools

A basic understanding of Chinese history is assumed. If you are unfamiliar with Chinese history, you might read a general text like Jacques Gernet's *A History of Chinese Civilization*; Ebrey, Walthall, and Palais, *Pre-Modern Asia to 1800: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*; Harold M. Tanner's *China: A History, Volume I*; or Conrad Schirokauer's *A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations*.

Participation will count for 35% of your grade. Students, in small groups, will be responsible for presenting the books and leading discussions on each week's

readings. In addition, each student will present two relevant books that are not required reading for the whole class. I will help you locate these. It would be good to present books related to your own research project.

A 2-3 page reading response is due each week from each student. In the reading responses, do not summarize. Instead, write questions or topics for discussion, your own reactions to the readings, your evaluation of the author's argument and evidence, and your overall assessment of the book. This assignment is worth 30% of your grade. For each of you, I will drop the lowest graded response in calculating your final grade.

There will be a project or paper due during final exam week, worth 35% of your grade. You will present your papers to each other at a dinner at Prof Cahill's house on the day of our scheduled final exam. You will need to clear your paper or project with me by the fourth week. You can submit an informal proposal and I will return it to you by the next class. Your proposal must contain, at a minimum, your name, your topic, and three academic sources you will use in your research. You may submit as much additional material in this proposal as you wish. You may do the class project with another classmate or classmates.

There is no final examination. Students are expected to come to class with the assigned reading finished, to participate in discussions, and to complete all the assignments. You must complete all assignments to pass the course. Do not miss class without a written medical excuse. No assignments will be accepted by email. Do not plagiarize. If you do, you will fail the assignment and possibly the course and I will be required to report you to the academic ethics office.

Course Schedule: Topics and Assignments

Week One

I. Introductions

April 4

Introduction to the course, readings, and assignments
Important concepts and definitions

Week Two

II. Shang Archaeology

April 11

Read Chang Kuang-chih. Reading responses due.

Week Three

III. Zhou Archaeology

April 18

Read van Falkenhausen. Reading responses due.

Week Four

III. A. Others

April 25

Read Di Cosmo. Reading responses due
Proposals for final paper or project due.

IV. Han Archaeology, Daily Life, Beliefs, and Craftsmen

Week Five

May 2 **IV. A. Daily Life and Beliefs**
Read both Loewe books. Reading responses due.

Week Six

May 9 **IV. B. Craftsmen**
Read Barbeiri-Low. Reading responses due.

Week Seven V. The Tomb

May 16 Read Wu. Reading responses due.

Week Eight VI. Imperial City Planning

May 23 Read Steinhardt. Reading responses due.

Week Nine VII. Daily Life During the Song Dynasty

May 30 Read Gernet. Reading responses due.
Students exchange papers.

Week Ten

June 6 Students present sources on their research topics.
Students return papers to each other with comments.

Final Exam Week Student Presentations

June Dinner at Prof Cahill's house with student presentations of
their research. Research papers due.

PAPER OR PROJECT GUIDELINES

The point of this assignment is to let you investigate in more depth a subject that interests you. You may choose almost any topic that fits within the subject matter of our course: archaeological finds as primary sources for Chinese history. You may do a group project. Some possible types of paper or project include:

1. Research paper with a very narrow focus (example: analysis of a specific archaeological site or find)
2. Fieldwork, survey, or site report
3. Fake primary sources: archaeological finds of any kind
4. Interpretive, theoretical, or argument-based essay
5. Propose something else

The paper or project will be judged on five points: **topic, research, effort, analysis, and the quality of the final product.** Prof Cahill must approve your topic. You will need to use the library. The director of the East Asian collection, Victoria Chu, will be giving a presentation on how to use the library's collections for research relevant to our class. At least six academic sources are required. Academic sources include books published by university presses or other reputable presses, articles from academic journals, and online versions of such books and articles. Some online sites are also suitable. Wikipedia is not an academic source, although you may use it to lead you to appropriate sources. Your paper should be approximately 10 pages long (double-spaced). A group paper or project would need to be proportionately longer, and include more sources in its bibliography. You may use any standard format for footnotes and bibliography.

WORKSHOP ON PAPER TOPIC SELECTION FOR INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PAPERS

You need to find a topic, locate good sources, do your research, and produce your final product in a very short time. I want to make your planning easy and the process and requirements clear.

Strategies:

To write a good short paper, about ten pages long, start planning and doing tasks now.

First: Pick a general area of interest to you within which you will find your specific topic.

The most important question to start with is: What topic related to this course interests you? Pick something you can realistically finish in ten weeks. Pick something you think is compelling, perhaps related to your major or to a personal interest or hobby. You have to live with it and, in the end, interest others in it.

In searching for a topic, skim through all of texts assigned for our course; something we study late in the quarter may interest you the most.

Start your research and identify sources. Seeing what is available will help you eliminate impossible topics and narrow your topic. Use the bibliographies at the back of your textbooks, Geisel Library's computerized search engines, Google books, and Jstor. Refer to the resources presented by Victoria Chu.

Next: Pick a very specific and limited topic within your area of interest. Narrow it down further. Examples would be one site or find, the work of one archaeologist, or one controversy. Be concise and clear in your presentation.

Make sure it is related to Chinese archaeology. Your topic may include something contemporary. (Examples: presentations of the subject in modern movies or novels, current controversies about repatriation, the effect of designation of a site as a cultural heritage site.)

Decide if you want to do an individual or group project. This depends on your learning style and personality. Groups create community and can share resources: you can get more results for your time and work. But they require careful planning, and some people just work better alone.

Next: Get to work. As you go, narrow your topic down even more. Go for quality rather than quantity and specificity rather than general coverage. No summaries! Only give the background necessary for understanding your topic. Keep quotes at a minimum. Continue looking for more resources. Your final paper should convince the reader with a clear argument supported by relevant evidence. Do not tell everything you find, just what is necessary to make your case.

Have your topic and at least one book and two articles identified and located before you turn in your proposal. One book and two articles will provide grounding in the field and tell you what people have said about the subject. When you turn in your topic, that material plus any other resources, questions, and progress you have found or made are what you may hand in.

The proposal does not need to be formal. It should include your name, your general topic, the specific question or issue you want to tackle, and a minimum of three academic sources.

Read, write, and revise.

Ask a question about your topic. Make sure your question is narrow and specific, not broad and general. Once you answer your question, write it down; that's your thesis. You need a thesis to have a good argument. The thesis belongs in the first paragraph of your paper.

Give yourself time. Keep revising and rewriting. Edit for good English usage, word choice, logical argument, and wordiness.

Be critical of your evidence and sources. You do not need to agree with everything that is in print, even works written by reputable scholars. If you are not sure a source is reliable or up to date, ask me.

Have another student or friend read your paper. That will help you see what is unclear or unconvincing. You may also show me and your classmates pieces of unfinished work for feedback. We will be discussing your ongoing research each week. You will be exchanging first drafts in the ninth week of classes and returning them to each other in the tenth week.

Your final product should include analysis and your conclusions on the subject. Do not write a summary of the sources, but present your original critical thinking about the subject, backed up with evidence from the sources.

History = telling a story (a narrative) and making an argument or interpretation; make it good and clear.

Give context; but give only background information that's important for your topic.

Sell the reader on the project: why is it important?

WRITING TIPS: COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

In general I will not grade for style, although I will correct grammatical and other mistakes on your papers. However, if you make mistakes on the usage tips listed here, I will take off points. You can always come to me for help in improving your writing, or go to OASIS. If you want to use OASIS, make an appointment now.

1. Never use single quotes ('like this') except for a quotation within a quotation. Example: The teacher said: "Billy says 'uh' too often." Especially do not use them to emphasize a term or suggest that you are using it ironically.

2. Never use contractions, such as "don't," in a paper except when quoting someone's speech.

By the way, "it's" = "it is," while "its" means "belonging to it." Examples: "It's a boy!"; *Civilization and Its Discontents*

3. Avoid forms of the verb “to be” and passive verbs whenever possible. They bore the reader, and allow you to speak indirectly and wiggle out of taking responsibility for what you write.
4. Avoid useless modifiers, especially “very.” Avoid wordiness in general. Both weaken the impact of your writing.
5. Avoid repetition.
6. Put foreign words and book titles in italics.
Examples: *wenren* 文人; *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Shishuo xinyu*.
7. Translate Chinese terms and titles in your text. Example: *wenren* (literatus or literary gentleman); *Shishuoxinyu*, “A New Account of Tales of the World.” Use the translation after the first mention of the term. After that, stick to either the Chinese term or the translation; do not repeat both each time the term comes up.
8. Give dates the first time (and only the first time) you mention a person or historical period.
9. Do not use direct quotations from your texts and sources unless absolutely necessary: your own words are always better, and show that you have grasped what the author meant. Use footnotes instead. An example of a permissible quote would be one from a primary source that you are interpreting.
10. The correct usage is: “He is the person who,” not “he is the person that...”
11. Put periods and commas inside quotation marks. Example: “She vowed to kill her sister.”
12. When making lists, put commas after each item in the list, up to the “and” or “or.” Examples: “She bought guns, poisons, and a whip.” “He might stab, shoot, or beat her.”
13. You may use the first person in your text. Example: “I argue that....”
14. The proper usage is “based on,” not “based off of.” (The latter comes from the world of computer gaming, not academic writing.)
15. If you discuss a piece of art or architecture, provide a picture, and give the date.
16. If you choose to include them, provide Chinese characters the first time and only the first time you mention the name or term.

17. You may use any standard system of citation, but be consistent. Use one of our texts as a model if you do not know any system of citation.
18. Do not cite Wikipedia or any other non-academic online source. If you do, your grade on the project will be lowered. If you are uncertain about whether a source is permissible, ask us.
19. Do not use the term “Confucian,” “tradition,” or “traditional China” unless you define exactly what you mean.
20. Do not use the construction “It was...that” E.g. “It was under the emperor Kangxi that the Manchu elite first embraced traditional Han Chinese fashions.”
21. Pick one Romanization system and stick to it.
22. Make sure subjects agree with verbs and pronouns with their referents.

CHRONOLOGY

B.C.E.

Late Neolithic Period	ca. 5000 – 2000
Xia?	ca. 2100 – 1600
Shang	ca. 1600 – 1028
Zhou	ca. 1027 – 256
Western Zhou	ca. 1027-771
Eastern Zhou	ca. 770-256
Spring and Autumn	722-468
Warring States	403-221
Qin	221-207
Han	206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.
Former Han	206 B.C.E-8 C.E.

C.E.

Xin	9-25
Latter Han	25-220
Three Kingdoms	220-265
Wei	220-265
Shu	221-263
Wu	222-280
Jin	265-420
Western Jin	265-317
Eastern Jin	317-420
Six Dynasties	420-589
Southern dynasties	
Liu Song	420-479
Southern Qi	470-502

	Southern Liang	502-557
	Southern Chen	557-589
	Northern dynasties	
	Northern Wei	386-534
	Eastern Wei	534-550
	Western Wei	535-577
	Northern Qi	550-577
	Northern Zhou	557-581
Sui		581-618
Tang		618-907
	Zhou	690-705
Five Dynasties		907-960
	Liao	916-1125
Song		960-1279
	Northern Song	960-1126
	Southern Song	1127- 1279
Jin (Jurchen)		1115-1234
Yuan (Mongols)		1260-1368
Ming		1368-1644
Qing		1644-1911
Republic (Taiwan)		1911-
People's Republic		1949-

