HSTAS 551
Field Course in Chinese History to 1276

Instructor:
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Office hours: Thursday 2:30 to 3:20 or by appointment

The goal of this “field” course is to help students gain familiarity with the English-language scholarship on the Tang and Song periods, especially the scholarship since 1980. We begin by taking a look at six of the most important scholars active in the 1960s -1980s, and discuss the issues and approaches that engaged them and how those changed over time. Next we turn to subfields, in each case reading two articles published since 2000 and often hearing reports on a book. The list of books has been limited to works after 1980.

All of the articles for common reading are available as electronic copies.

Assignments:

1. Bibliographical essay on a field of scholarship, either as broad as the topics in the syllabus, or somewhat narrower (such as economic history or intellectual history), but not too narrow (not studies of Zhu Xi or studies of Fujian). The topic must be approved in advance, if possible by the second week. The aim of the bibliographical essay is to assess the state of scholarship in the field, the dominant approaches or theoretical frameworks, the key issues, the most influential books or articles, and so on. DO NOT LIMIT YOURSELF TO THE BOOKS LISTED UNDER A TOPIC BELOW, BUT DEVELOP YOUR OWN READING LIST, INCLUDING ARTICLES AND POSSIBLY OLDER WORKS IF NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND MAJOR CONTROVERSIES. Bring copies of your reading list to distribute to the class on the week you make your oral presentation. Target length: 15-20 pages. Oral presentation of the main themes of the report in the appropriate week. Target length: 15 minutes.

2. Oral reviews of two books listed on the syllabus on different days, with no overlap with bibliographical essay (in other words, these two books reviews should force you to read outside your own main interest). Target length: 8-10 minutes. Prepare an outline to distribute in class. Look up at least one review of the book, and mention it in your report.

3. Reading notes. Each week bring two or three sentences on each article we read, identifying a key point you consider worth addressing and whether you found the article persuasive.
Grading: Participation in class discussions and reading notes 25%  
Two oral book reports 25%  
Bibliographical essay 50%  

Week 1 4/1  **Introduction**

Week 2 4/8  **Founders of the field: Arthur Wright and Denis Twitchett**

BRING CHOICES FOR ORAL BOOK REVIEWS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

**Common reading:**


Week 3 4/15  **Founders of the field: Edward Schafer and James Liu 劉子健**

**Common reading:**


Week 4 4/22  **Founders of the field: E. A. Kracke and Robert Hartwell**

**Common reading:**


Week 5 4/29  **Religion and Ritual**

**Common reading:**


Books


(see also some others under material culture)

**Week 6  5/6 Intellectual and cultural history; the intersection of literature and history**

**Common reading:**


**Books**


De Weerdt, Hilde. 2007. *Competition Over Content: Negotiating Standards for the Civil Service Examinations in Imperial China (1127-1279).* Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center.


**Week 7  5/13 Political, institutional, diplomatic, and military history**

**Common reading:**


Books:


**Week 8 5/20 Material Culture**

**Common Reading:**


Books:


Week 9  5/27 Social History: Elite studies, family, gender

Common reading:


**Books:**


**Week 10 6/3**  
**Attention to place// long term perspectives**

**Bibliographical essay due**

**Common reading:**


**Books:**


