The goal of this course is to gain a practical ability in doing research in Chinese sources in order to answer historical questions. Each session we will take a type of source, read line-by-line a sample text distributed in advance, as well as sight-read short samples students bring to class, prepared to translated for the class.

Each student will do some sort of project, depending on interests and background. The project can range from a study of an important text (editions, history, value, etc.), to an annotated translation, to an investigation of the sources available on a particular topic, to a critique of the primary sources used in a book or substantial article. Proposals for projects should be submitted by the fifth week.

Grading: Weekly assignments and participation: 70%
Final project: 30%

Week 1  3/28  Introduction: Finding the information you need in diverse sources

Week 2  4/4  The Song, Liao, and Jin standard histories and other narrative histories

Texts:  Song shi 宋史 22.417 and Xuzizhi tongjian changbian shibu 續資治通鑑長編拾補 51.1a-7b for the 12th month of 1125.

Assignment: Compare the treatment of some other event in two narrative histories.

Recommended background reading:

Charles Hartman, “Bibliographic Notes on Sung Historical Works: Topical Narratives from the Long Draft Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror


Week 3 4/11 **Biographical sources**

Text: *Chen Liang ji* 陳亮集 23.362.

**Assignment:** Look up someone in Chang Bide’s index of Song biographical materials and check how many of the sources are available in our library. Bring one with you.

**Recommended background reading,**


Week 4 4/18 **Diaries, letters, inscriptions, and other true primary sources**

Text: *Zeng Gong yilu* 曾公遺錄 9.3a-4a.

**Assignment:** Look through a major collection of published inscriptions to see what sort of inscriptions it has for the Song, and bring one in.

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**Recommended background reading:**


Week 5 4/25 **Anecdotes**

Text: *Yijianzhi* 夷堅志 Zhigui 支癸 5.1261.

**Assignment:** Bring in one of the works in the series Tangsong shiliao biji congkan series, ready to translate a short passage.
Recommended background reading:


Alister David Inglis, Hong Mai’s Record of the Listener and Its Song Dynasty Context. SUNY Press, 2006.


Week 6 5/2  Regional histories/gazetteers

Text: Jingding Jiankang zhi 景定建康志 28.3b-4a.

Assignment: Compare the treatment of some topic in at least three Song or Yuan period gazetteers

Recommended background reading:


Week 7 5/9  Memorials

Text: Song hui yao 宋會要 Chongru 崇儒 5.26a-27a.

Assignment: Choose an issue of historical interest and investigate what kinds of information on it are contained in the Song huiyao.

Recommended Background Reading:

Robert M. Hartwell, “A Guide to Documentary Sources of Middle Period Chinese History: Documentary Forms Contained in the Collected Papers (wen-chi) of

Week 8 5/16 Legal Texts

Text: Qingming ji 清明集 8.245-46.

Assignment: Read another case in this book, and explicate it to the class. You may either choose one that Mc Knight and Liu have translated (see below) or one that they skipped, depending on your own priorities.

Recommended Background Reading:

Week 9 5/23 Daoist Sources

Text: Daozang 道藏 Vol. 5. Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian houji 歷世真仙體道通鑑後集, by Zhao Daoyi 趙道一(1294) 4.1a-b (vol.5, p.469A); vol. 30: Shangqing lingbao dafa 上清靈寶大法 27 (vol. 30, pages 900-901).


Recommended Background Reading:


Week 10 5/30 Presentations

WRITTEN VERSIONS OF PROJECTS DUE