

Methods in Historical Research and Exposition:

A Process-Based Approach to World History



A Brief Introduction to Historical Research and Exposition

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Peking University

Contents



Writing Assessment Review



Reading Sources



Discovering Questions



Writing Your Paper



Citing Sources



Finding Sources at PKU



Questions?

Countries that Border Germany



Writing Assessment Review

Be precise and concrete.

Good: During 1875 to 1900, the conditions of the workers in the United States had been improved to some degrees, while this improvement was achieved by a lot of sacrifices.

Better: During 1875 to 1900, the material living conditions and legal rights of workers in the United States had risen to some degree, while this improvement was achieved only through ideological sacrifice and economic inefficiency.

Writing Assessment Review

Be precise and concrete.

Good: During the period from 1875 to 1891, organized labor did improve the position of workers despite the fact that they also encountered a hard time at first.

Better: During the period from 1875 to 1891, organized labor improved the material living conditions and expanded the political rights of workers; most of these changes, however, were slow to manifest, occurring largely during the second half of this period.

Writing Assessment Review

Be precise and concrete.

Note: Also a function of the question.

Writing Assessment Review

~~Don't~~ Do not use contractions.

Writing Assessment Review

It is OK to speak in the first person.

Writing Assessment Review

“First” vs. “firstly”

Writing Assessment Review

“from” + “-”

“from” + “to”

“According to these eight documents and my knowledge of U.S. history, I think that organized labor or the labor union had few achievements in improving the actual position of workers in the period from 1875-1900.”

Writing Assessment Review

“raise” vs. “rise”

Writing Assessment Review

Always couple:

evidence

and

explanation

Quotation
Paraphrase
Statistics
Information!

Logic
Reasoning
Argumentation
Opinion!

Writing Assessment Review

Use “that” and “which” properly.

Writing Assessment Review

Use “that” and “which” properly.



I ate the apple **that** is red.

ESSENTIAL CLAUSE:

You *NEED* it to know which apple!



I ate the apple, **which** is red.

NONESSENTIAL CLAUSE:

You *DO NOT NEED* it to know which apple!

Writing Assessment Review

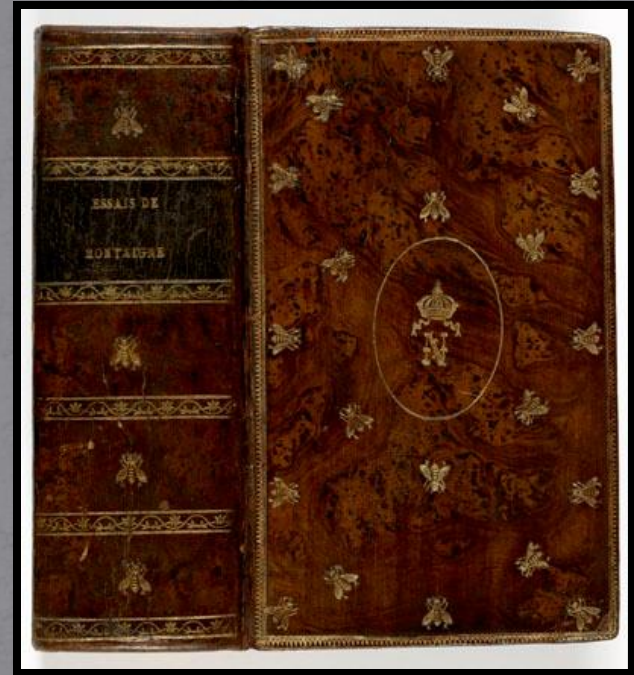
Watch your tenses.



History: Past tense

It's over!

(regardless of what the physicists say)



Documents: Present tense

They're timeless!

(Shakespeare, anyone?)

Writing Assessment Review

Use **very specific** language.

“**hours**” versus “**average daily work hours**”

“**nineteenth-century American laborers**” versus “**they**”

“**higher hourly wages, better education, and more bargaining power with employers**” versus “**rise in position**”

Reading Sources

STATE OF Missouri TOWN OF Saint Louis

I, William Cathey, born in Independence,
in the State of Missouri, aged twenty-two years,
and by occupation a Cook, do HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE to have
voluntarily enlisted this fifteenth day of November
1866, as a Soldier in the Army of the United States of America, for the
period of THREE YEARS, unless sooner discharged by proper authority: Do also
agree to accept such bounty, pay, rations, and clothing, as are, or may be, estab-
lished by law. And I, William Cathey, do solemnly swear,
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America,
and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or
opponents whomsoever; and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President
of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according
to the Rules and Articles of War.

Sworn and subscribed to, at Saint Louis, Mo.
this 15th day of November 1866.
BEFORE Henry K. Harrison William Cathey
Major 1st Regt.

I CERTIFY, ON HONOR, That I have carefully examined the above named recruit, agreeably to
the General Regulations of the Army, and that in my opinion he is free from all bodily defects and mental
infirmary, which would, in any way, disqualify him from performing the duties of a soldier.

Wm. Powers
Act. Asst. Surg. Major
EXAMINING SURGEON.

I CERTIFY, ON HONOR, That I have minutely inspected the Recruit, William Cathey
previously to his enlistment, and that he was entirely sober when enlisted; that, to the best of my
judgment and belief, he is of lawful age; and that, in accepting him as duly qualified to perform the duties
of an able-bodied soldier, I have strictly observed the Regulations which govern the recruiting service.
This soldier has black eyes, black hair, black complexion, is 5 feet 9 inches
high.

Henry K. Harrison
Major 1st Regt. of Inf. Mo.
RECRUITING OFFICER.

Assigned to the 38th Regiment of Infantry
U. S. Army.
Superintendent.

24832

14. G. O. No. 721

Reading Sources

BIG



SMALL

Thesis?

Topic
sentences?

Evidence?

Reading Sources

Elements Worthy of Special Attention

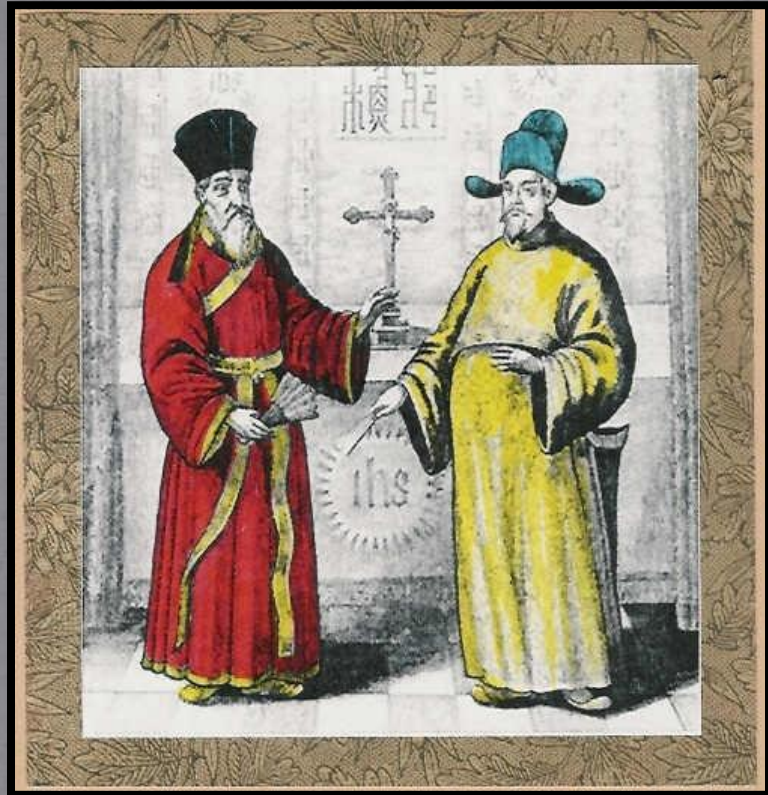
- Subtitles
- Topic sentences
- Evidence
- Transitions
- Concessions
- Incoherence

*Always ask yourself: How do these connect to the **thesis**?*

Reading Sources

- General > specific
Better and more flexible memory
- Understand structure before detail
Will help you with your own writing
- Multiple fast readings BEFORE one close reading

Reading Sources



Understanding in context = Better and more flexible memory

Reading Sources

Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?

CONTEXT: Every source has its own history!

Reading Sources



Take your time.

Discovering Questions

Question: Why were Fertile Crescent civilizations among the most advanced in the ancient world?

Discovering Questions

How can we make this question more focused, controversial, and researchable?

Discovering Questions

1. “Add facts to the stew”

The majority of the world's important domesticated grains are genetically related to wild plants in the Fertile Crescent

The Fertile Crescent region has one of the most temperate climates in the world.

Hunter-gatherer tribes in the Fertile Crescent began to develop sedentary agriculture lifestyles as early as 14,000 years ago—a time considered to be earlier than comparable shifts in many other cultures.

Discovering Questions

1. “Add facts to the stew”

Given that the majority of the world's important domesticated grains are genetically related to wild plants in the Fertile Crescent, that this region has one of the most temperate climates in the world, and that hunter-gatherer tribes in the Fertile Crescent began to develop sedentary agriculture lifestyles earlier than many other cultures, why were Fertile Crescent civilizations among the most advanced in the ancient world?

Discovering Questions

2. Make premises explicit

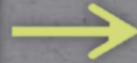
What does “advanced” mean? Technology? Social complexity? Average quality of life?

The Fertile Crescent region has one of the most temperate climates in the world.



Did climate act only through agriculture in determining the course of Fertile Crescent civilizations, or did it affect advancement in other ways?

The majority of the world's important domesticated grains are genetically related to wild plants in the Fertile Crescent.



Might the genetic relationship between modern plants and Fertile Crescent flora demonstrate a common source?

Hunter-gatherer tribes in the Fertile Crescent began to develop sedentary agriculture lifestyles as early as 14,000 years ago—a time considered to be earlier than comparable shifts in many other cultures.



Why might early development of an agricultural lifestyle have been important for “advancement” in the Fertile Crescent relative to other regions?

Discovering Questions

3. Keep going!

What does “advanced” mean? Technology? Social complexity?
Average quality of life?

How might the Fertile Crescent’s especially temperate climate have interacted with other factors to spur early advancement in its indigenous cultures?

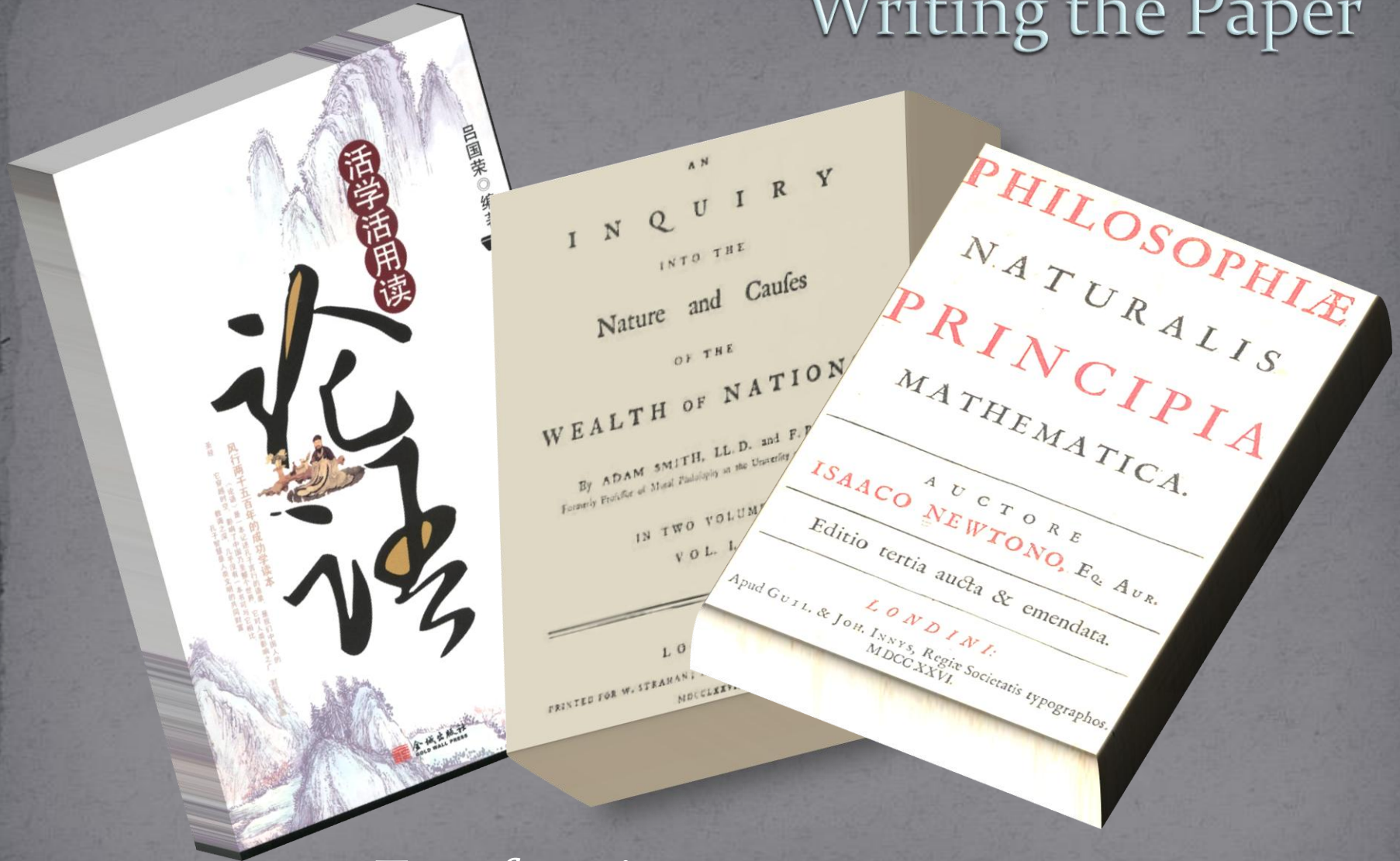
Might the genetic relationship between modern plants and Fertile Crescent flora demonstrate an imbalanced diffusion of agricultural technology across societies?

How did differences between agriculture in the Fertile Crescent and elsewhere give rise to differing speeds of advancement among ancient cultures?

Writing the Paper



Writing the Paper



Turn facts into an argument.

Argument = Thesis

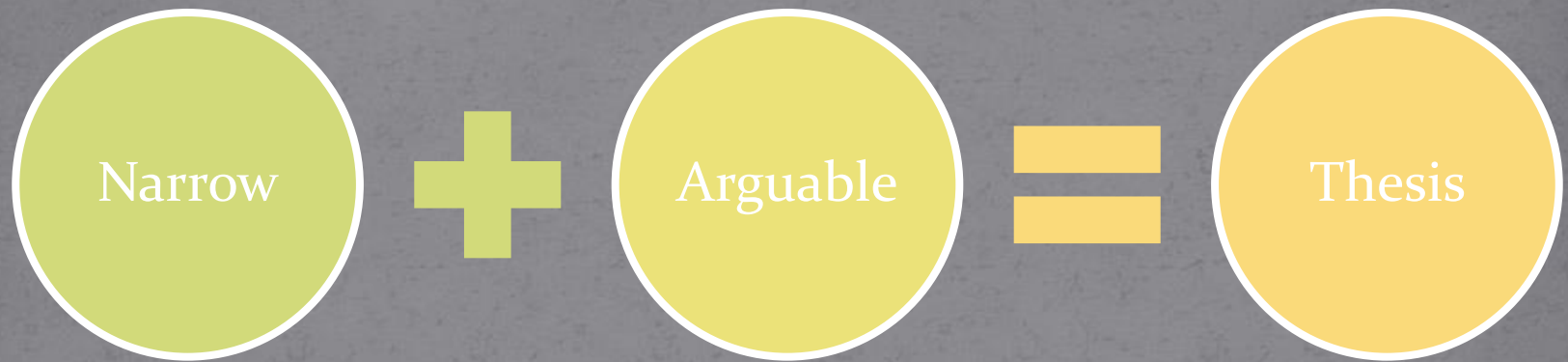
Thesis: The central argument of your paper or speech, usually summarized in one or a few sentences.

ARGUMENTATIVE

SPECIFIC

CONCISE

What Is A Thesis?



What Is A Thesis?

Too general: "Communism collapsed in Europe due to societal discontent."

Better: "Communism collapsed in Eastern Europe because of the ruling elite's inability to address the economic concerns of the people"

A thesis is **narrow** and **specific** enough to allow for a tight argument.

What Is A Thesis?



A thesis is a sentence with which others can disagree.

What Is A Thesis?

"Communism collapsed in Eastern Europe."

"While cultural forces contributed to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the disintegration of economies played the key role in driving its decline"

"The fall of communism is the best thing that ever happened in Europe"

Michael Dukakis lost the 1988 presidential election because he failed to campaign vigorously after the Democratic National Convention.

While Dukakis' "soft-on-crime" image hurt his chances in the 1988 election, his failure to campaign vigorously after the Democratic National Convention bore a greater responsibility for his defeat.

Writing the Paper

Good Thesis?
Bad Thesis?

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

Henry David Thoreau, the author of *Walden*, and Theodore Parker, the unitarian minister and abolitionist, were two of the greatest minds of the antebellum period. The purpose of this paper is to examine means of resistance through a comparison of the philosophies of Thoreau and Parker.

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

BAD: No argument.

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

As slaves, African Americans were given little or no rights as families. Husbands and wives were parted, and children were separated from their mothers by masters who had no qualms about selling them. Even those families kept intact were by no means protected from the hardships of slavery. Through emancipation came new opportunities and problems for African American families.

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

BETTER: But too vague!

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

The evolution trial of 1925 was made a farce and a comedy by the circumstances surrounding the trial. Behind this facade lay issues that were deeply disturbing to the Americans of the 1920s. By an examination of the Scopes Trial, some of these issues can begin to be perceived and analyzed and perhaps they can reveal a better understanding of the decade.

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

BAD: No argument AND
too vague!

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

Writing the Paper

Although freedom made life better in general for African-American women, freedwomen may have lost some of the power they had held in the family under slavery, because freedom subjected them to the patriarchal domination of a sexist society.

Develop a focused, complex, and arguable thesis.

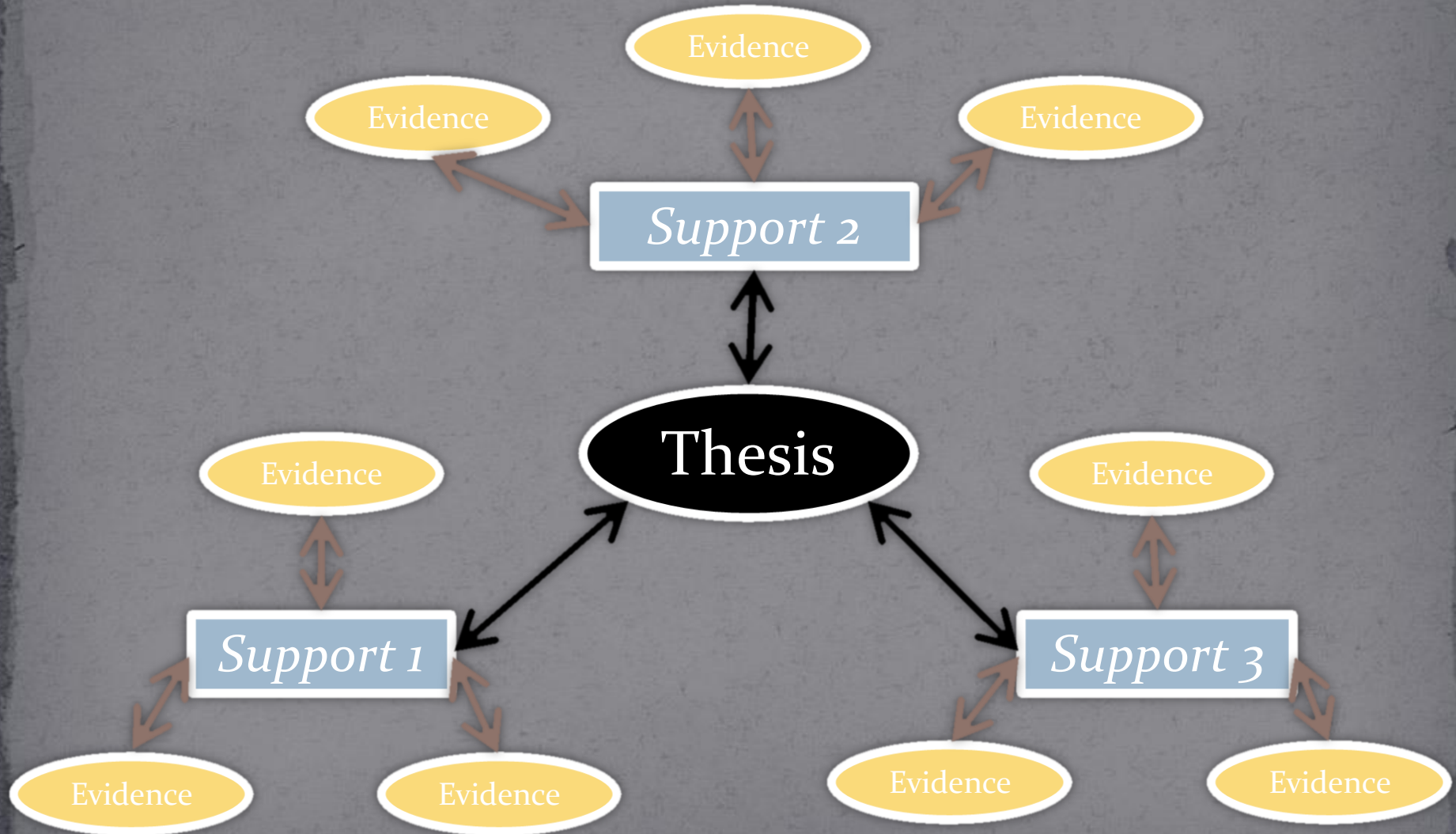
Writing the Paper

GOOD!

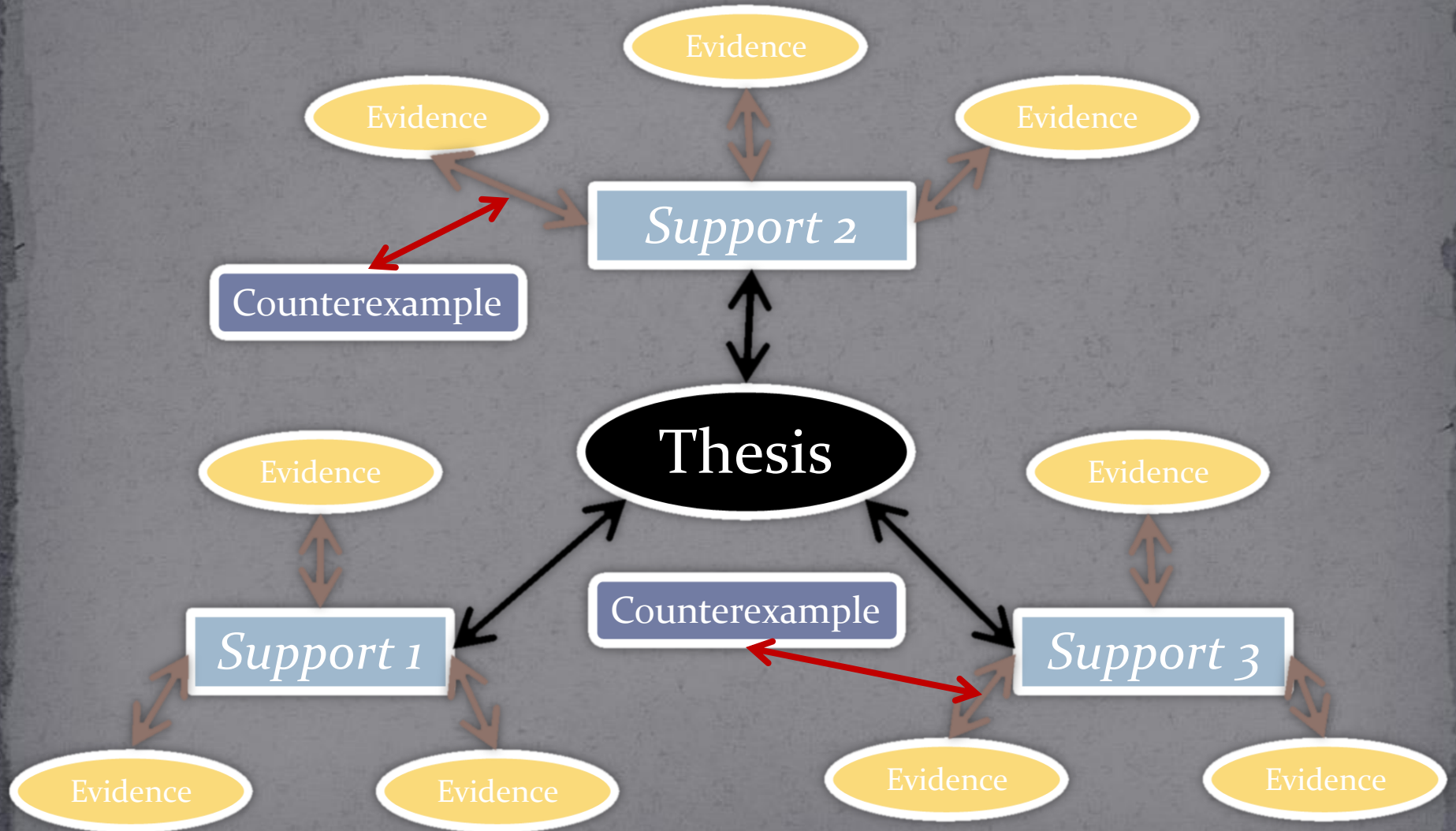
Structuring Your Paper



Graphical Outlining: Basic Structure

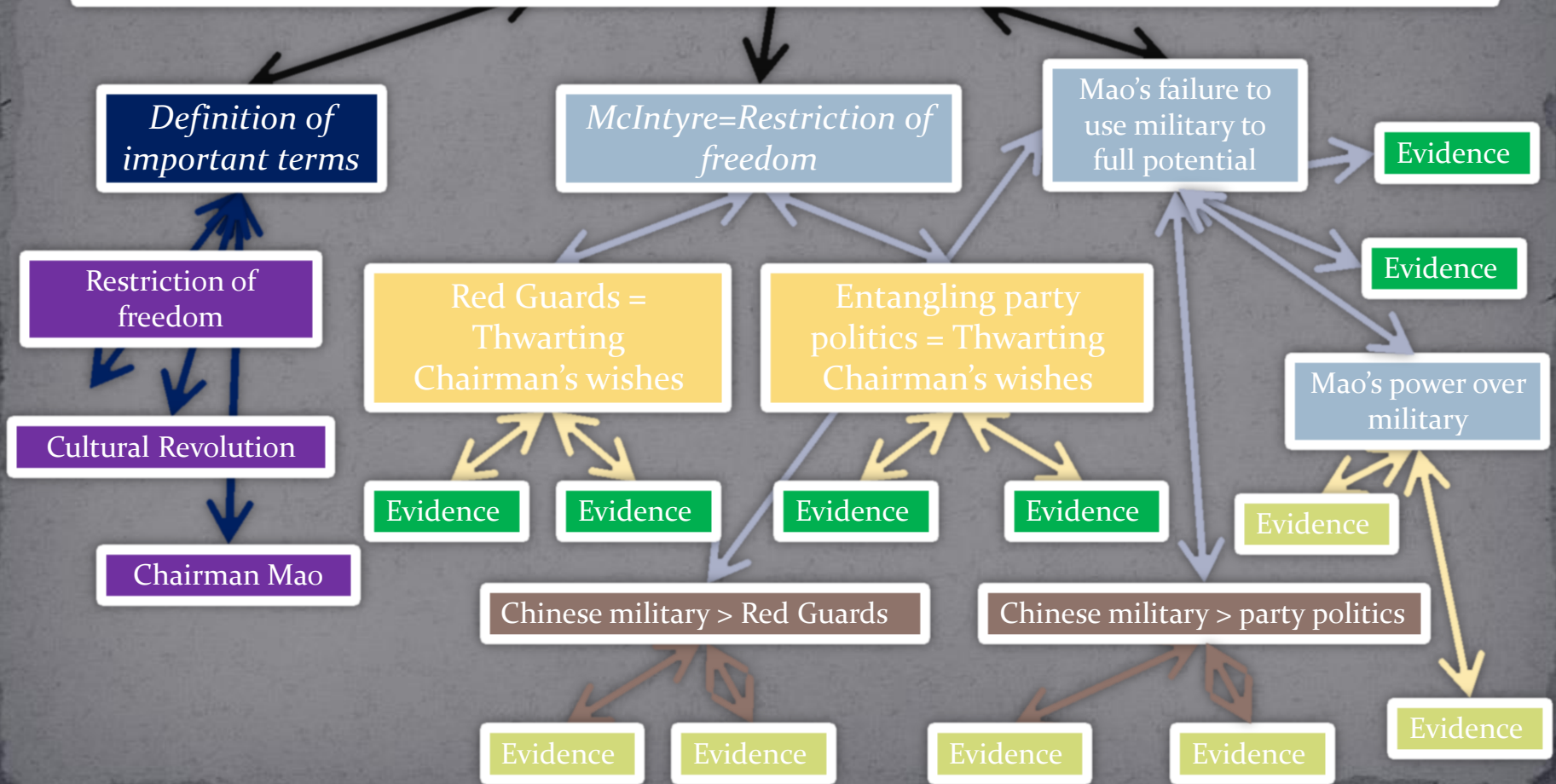


Graphical Outlining: Counterarguments



Graphical Outlining: Paper VI

Thesis: In his discussion of Mao's management of the Cultural Revolution, McIntyre applies a Pomperian restriction of freedom to the account by implying that the decentralized activities of the Red Guards and the entangling party politics of the time thwarted rather than reflected the Chairman's wishes. This viewpoint, however, ignores Mao's influence over the Chinese military, a power whose potential for executing change would have allowed the Chairman to overcome these opposing forces had he applied it differently .



Citing Sources

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Manuscript Preparation

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Books

The Books Division offers [general guidelines for preparing electronic manuscripts](#) as well as [art submission requirements](#).

Journals

Many of Chicago's journals provide statements of editorial policy and instructions for submission of manuscripts for Web-based peer review on their Web pages.

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The Journals Division offers [Instructions for Preparing Manuscript Files Using Microsoft Word or WordPerfect](#), as well as special instructions for the preparation of [tables](#) and [math](#).

The Journals Division also offers online [Guidelines for Submission of Artwork](#), including digital art.

Writing Assessment Review

Always couple:

evidence

and

explanation

Quotation
Paraphrase
Statistics
Information!

Logic
Reasoning
Argumentation
Opinion!

Citing Sources

- Quote in **short bursts**

“Whenever he talked about “Reds,” the Cardinal did not hold back his feelings. “The seven-headed Hydra of Marxist Communism,” he was fond of saying, was a “modern monster,” diametrically opposed to all the teachings and ideals of the Catholic church.

- Avoid **block quotations**
- ALWAYS **explain** your quotations
- Either quote or paraphrase, but ***not both.***
- ALWAYS **reference your sources!**

Citing Sources

Chicago Style

Footnote

+

Bibliography

According to contractualism, a moral decision is characterized by the following structure:

- First, a moral agent assesses her reasons for a particular action,³ a feat that Scanlon holds can be achieved with satisfactory accuracy by a person so motivated.⁴ A Scanlonian “reason” is an irreducibly primitive explanation for one’s behavior. Reasons are “irreducibly primitive” because they underlie all justifications (desire, intention, belief, etc.) for a particular action. Regardless of this irreducibility, however, their content is highly variable. A reason for an agent’s refusal to sell the heirloom earrings left to her by a late cousin, for example, may range from agent-centered assertions

³ While the term “contractualism” has a history longer than that of Scanlon’s work in the field, all variants of the word in this paper refer to the Scanlonian variety as outlined in her 1998 book *What We Owe to Each Other*.

⁴ Scanlon, T.M. *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1998).

⁵ The scope of what constitutes an “action”—can one refer to, for example, the act of believing—is an interesting question that is, however, not central to this analysis.

⁶ “The language of reasons ... is crucial to an adequate description of the structure of our own practical reasoning and also to our relations with others, as rational creatures who recognize many of the same reasons and can recognize the value of each other” (2004, p. 77).

IV. Bibliography⁷⁴

Bai, Shouyi. *An Outline History of China*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1982.

Chapman, Michael. *The Historian’s Companion*. Reading, MA: Trebarwyth Press, 2008.

Twitchett, Denis, and Michael Lowe. *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 1: The Ch’in and Han Empires*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Zhang, Yingpin and Fan Wei. *The History and Civilization of China*. Beijing: Central Party Literature Publishing House, 2003.

⁷³ Michael Chapman, *The Historian’s Companion* (Reading, MA: Trebarwyth Press, 2008).

⁷⁴ For the sake of brevity, the sources of sources are not listed in the bibliography.

Citations

- Chicago Manual of Style
- Require footnotes and bibliography
- FULL citations required
- Can say “Ibid., x-y” for serial citations from same source (in footnotes only)
- Do NOT necessarily follow citation format of sources!

Citing Sources

Chicago-Style Footnote

Edward O. Laumann et al., *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 262.

Citing Sources

Chicago-Style Bibliography Entry

Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Citations

- Book
 - **Footnote:** John Hope Franklin, *George Washington Williams: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 54.
 - **Bibliography:** Franklin, John Hope. *George Washington Williams: A Biography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Article in a scholarly journal
 - **Footnote:** Richard Jackson, "Running Down the Up-Escalator: Regional Inequality in Papua New Guinea," *Australian Geographer* 14 (May 1979): 180.
 - **Bibliography:** Jackson, Richard. "Running Down the Up-Escalator: Regional Inequality in Papua New Guinea," *Australian Geographer* 14 (May 1979): 180-185.
- Lecture:
 - **Footnote:** Stacy D'Erasmus, "The Craft and Career of Writing" (lecture, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, April 26, 2000).
 - **Bibliography:** D'Erasmus, Stacy. "The Craft and Career of Writing." Lecture, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, April 26, 2000.

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EBSCO (<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/>)

JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/>)

LexisNexis Academic
(<http://origin-www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/>)

Periodicals Archive Online (<http://pao.chadwyck.co.uk/home.do>)

Writing the Paper

Writing recapitulates reading:

Skim BEFORE you close-read.

Outline BEFORE you write.

Writing the Paper



Take your time.

Writing the Paper

Write **many drafts**.

Change your thesis as needed.

Fine-tune your language.

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a forest at night or in low light. The scene is filled with the silhouettes of tall evergreen trees. A bright, circular light source, possibly a moon or a distant light, is visible through the branches on the left side, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the surrounding foliage. The ground is dark and appears to be covered in a layer of snow or frost, with some patches of lighter color visible. The overall mood is mysterious and serene.

Any Questions ?