
UNIT 6 TRADITIONAL CHINESE HISTORIOGRAPHY

Structure

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Background
 - 6.2.1 Confucianism
 - 6.2.2 The Imperial Bureaucratic State
- 6.3 Development of the Historiographical Tradition
 - 6.3.1 The Annals
 - 6.3.2 The *Historical Records (Shi Ji)* of Sima Qian
 - 6.3.3 Dynastic Histories
 - 6.3.4 The Later Imperial Period
- 6.4 Historical Theories
 - 6.4.1 Dynastic Cycle
 - 6.4.2 ‘Continuous History’
- 6.5 Distinctive Features of the Traditional Chinese Historiography
 - 6.5.1 Official History
 - 6.5.2 Normative History
 - 6.5.3 Standard Format
 - 6.5.4 Objectivity and Integrity
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Chronology of Major Dynasties
- 6.8 A Brief Note on Pronunciation
- 6.9 Exercises
- 6.10 Suggested Reading

6.1 INTRODUCTION

“I have gathered up and brought together the old traditions of the world which were scattered and lost. I have examined the deeds and events of the past and investigated the principles behind their success and failure, their rise and decay.... I wished to examine into all that concerns heaven and man, to penetrate the changes of the past and present.”

Thus wrote the Grand Historian Sima Qian, the pioneering author of China’s first great work of history, the *Shi Ji (Historical Records)*, in the 1st century B.C. Sima Qian inaugurated in China a sophisticated and unbroken tradition of history writing that has few parallels anywhere else in the world. About this tradition, the scholar W.T.de Bary has written that it represents “the most complete and unbroken record of its past possessed by any people”. Charles Gardner, in his pioneering study of Chinese traditional historiography, wrote: “No other ancient nation possesses records of its whole past so voluminous, so continuous, or so accurate.” In a similar vein, J.K.Fairbank wrote: “No people have been more interested in their past than the Chinese, for to them it was the model for the present and the primary source of information on human society, the

subject that concerned them most. No people have shown a greater realisation of being actors on the stage of history or greater interest in the future judgement of history on themselves.”

Historiography was a supremely important part of the classical tradition in China. It was intimately linked with her traditional philosophy, morality and statecraft. The great works of historical writing were also among the most widely read and revered elements in China’s literary tradition.

In the rest of this Unit, we will examine some of the main aspects of the great Chinese historiographical tradition. Specifically, we will look at the key factors that conditioned the writing of History in pre-modern China. We will also try to analyse the changes or developments in the historiographical tradition over time, and the main issues of debate among historians in imperial China. Lastly, we will examine some of the most distinctive characteristics of this tradition.

6.2 BACKGROUND

In this section we will discuss Confucianism which shaped the mental world of the Chinese scholars and helped them in formulating their ideas about the past. Most of these scholars were also officials who were part of the imperial state.

6.2.1 Confucianism

Confucianism is the name given to the teachings of Confucius, a 6th century B.C. scholar and petty official of the Chinese state of Lu, along with their further elaboration by his followers in subsequent centuries. Hardly a religion in the commonly accepted sense of the term, Confucianism nevertheless exercised the most profound influence on the spiritual and intellectual tradition of the Chinese people, and on their social and political behaviour. For various reasons which we shall now look into, Confucianism exerted a particularly powerful influence on the Chinese historiographical tradition.

The prime importance attached to the study and writing of History in the Chinese tradition can to a great extent be attributed to certain key elements of Confucianism. These can be summed up as:

- 1 humanism
- 1 reverence for the past
- 1 emphasis on moral education
- 1 concern with order in all things

We shall now look a little more deeply at each of these.

Humanism: History is above all the study of Man, of the affairs of human beings. In the Confucian world outlook, the central focus was not on God or some divine being, but on Man. How humans related to their fellow beings, how they ordered their affairs in this world, what values they inculcated in themselves and in others – this above all, was the main concern of Confucius and his philosophy. A deep interest in human affairs naturally provided a firm foundation for interest in History.

Reverence for the past: Even before Confucius, the Chinese had a tradition of reverence for the past, as reflected in their practice of a form of ancestor worship from very early times. However, Confucius gave a philosophical underpinning to this tradition. Living in a time of growing political anarchy and flux, Confucius looked on the ancient

past as a golden age of order and well-being. He was convinced that in the past could be found the models of moral, political and social behaviour that would help to end degeneration and chaos and to regenerate society.

Emphasis on moral education: According to Confucianism, the key thing that was needed to maintain harmony and well-being in the society as a whole was the existence of truly moral men. Although the dominant trend within Confucianism held that men were inherently good by nature, the real ‘men of virtue’ were expected to actively cultivate the right qualities in themselves through education. How to behave correctly under different circumstances, how to judge what was right or wrong, was to be learnt primarily through studying and drawing the proper lessons from the actions of men, past and present. Of the Five Classics regarded as essential for all educated men to master, it was no coincidence that two (the *Classic of History* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*) were essentially works of History.

Concern with order: The study of History is concerned not only in general with the affairs of Man, but specifically with finding some order and meaning in the way human society has developed over time. Those acquainted with the Chinese historiographical tradition are usually struck with its passion for order and classification, as well as its attempts to understand cause and effect and to identify recurring patterns over the course of human history. The Confucian concern with establishing and maintaining order in the present thus also influenced the way the past was conceived.

6.2.2 The Imperial Bureaucratic State

History in China was written by the scholars. There is nothing unusual about that, but what was distinctive about traditional China was that the scholars were also **officials**. Even those historians who were not actually holding an official position at the time of writing their histories were either officials in retirement or aspiring officials, as the Sinologist Etienne Balasz once noted. It was Balasz who also tersely characterised Chinese historiography as “written by officials for officials”.

What this meant, in effect, was that History writing reflected the concerns of the imperial state which the scholar-official class served. One important concern was to uphold the legitimacy of the Emperor and his ruling house or dynasty. The Confucian emphasis on ‘rule by virtue’ meant that it was not enough for an Emperor to base his right to rule on his de facto hold on power. No matter how an Emperor or dynasty came to power, they needed to justify their power at all times according to some well-established Confucian norms and conventions. Writing the history of previous dynasties or previous rulers in such a way as to enhance the prestige of the current ruler and his family, and to ensure their glory in succeeding ages, was therefore a major concern of the historian. The major works of History were usually either sponsored or commissioned by the rulers.

Despite this bias in favour of the current rulers, Chinese historiography, according to Balasz, “often evinced a degree of objectivity that was remarkable in the circumstances.” The following anecdote recorded in a great 11th century historical work, the *Zizhi tongjian*, illustrates the extent to which official historiographers could, if they were determined, maintain their independence of judgement:

“The [Tang dynasty] Emperor T’ ai-tsung spoke to the Imperial Censor Ch’u Sui-liang, saying: “Since you, Sir, are in charge of the Diaries of Action and Repose [i.e. the edited notes of the emperor’s activities maintained by the court historians], may I see what you have written?” Sui-liang replied: “The historiographers record the words and deeds of the ruler

of men, noting down all that is good and bad, in hopes that the ruler will not dare to do evil. But it is unheard of that the ruler himself should see what is written.” The emperor said: “If I do something that is not good, do you then also record it?” Sui-liang replied: “My office is to wield the brush. How could I dare not record it?” The Gentleman of the Yellow Gate [one of the courtiers] Liu Chi added: “Even if Sui-liang failed to record it, everyone else in the empire would”; to which the emperor replied: “True.”

This passage also illustrates another concern of historians, and that was to teach both the rulers and the officials by providing them with information needed for fulfilling their responsibilities, and by drawing lessons from past experience. The very name of the historical work from which this passage has been extracted means “Comprehensive Mirror for the Aid of Government”. As the range of concerns of the State expanded in the later imperial period, so too did the range of matters considered worthy of the historian’s brush. That is why many of the later works of History were truly encyclopedic in size and scope.

6.3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL TRADITION

We will now trace the development of the tradition of history-writing in pre-modern China over the centuries.

6.3.1 The Annals

The Chinese word “*shǐ*”, which came to mean “history”, originally referred to the court scribes who recorded astronomical events or other matters considered important to the rulers. The earliest form of historical writing consisted of brief chronological records of court events maintained by such scribes, which were known as “annals”. These date from the Eastern Zhou period (approximately 8th to 3rd centuries BC). The earliest extant example is from the state of Lu from where Confucius hailed. The style of writing followed in the annals was extremely terse, with just a bare mention of major events. For example, in one particular year, 715 BC, the only entry was a single character or word: “Pests”! Based on the annals, historians compiled the completed record of the reign period of individual rulers, known as the “Veritable Records”. Fairly consistently maintained throughout much of China’s history, the Veritable Records are a valuable and reliable source of historical information.

6.3.2 The *Historical Records (Shi Ji)* of Sima Qian

Undoubtedly the greatest historian of pre-modern China was **Sima Qian** (d.85 BC), who wrote his path-breaking “*Historical Records*” (*Shi Ji*) in the period of the Former Han Dynasty. Sima Qian was the first to write a comprehensive history of China from antiquity down to his own times, breaking out of the limitations of the annals format. What was more, he also established a format for historical works that was followed by historians down to modern times, which can be termed the “annals + monograph + biography” format.

In fact, the *Historical Records* had a complex 5-part structure, but the two key innovations that Sima Qian introduced was to have a section on topical essays or monographs, and one on biographies. The monograph section included subjects like rituals and music, calendars, astrology and astronomy, rivers and canals, and ‘weights and measures’ (which was actually a treatise on the economy). In later centuries, the

emphasis in the monograph section gradually shifted away from somewhat esoteric subjects like rites and rituals, astrology, etc., towards subjects with more practical relevance for administrators (like law, administration, waterworks and transport, etc.). Nevertheless, monographs formed a key part of almost every major work of History.

Sima Qian also included a section on biographies, covering not just outstanding individuals, but also groups of people, like ‘honest officials’, ‘despotic officials’, ‘chaste widows’, etc. This is also the section in the historical works in which one can find accounts of foreign peoples.

Not just the structure, but the *methodology* used by Sima Qian was adopted by later historians in important respects. He began the practice of faithfully reproducing the text of the sources he relied on. And where there were several versions, even differing versions, of the same subject or event, he reproduced them all, leaving it to the reader to decide on their relative reliability. He also broke away from the rigid and formal annals style of writing, and had a vivid style of his own. One of the greatest tributes to him was paid by the next great historian after him, Ban Gu, who said about the Grand Historian:

“He discourses without sounding wordy; he is simple without being rustic. His writing is direct and his facts sound. He does not falsify what is beautiful, nor does he conceal what is evil. Therefore his may be termed a “true record”.”

6.3.3 Dynastic Histories

One of the most impressive elements in the entire corpus of Chinese historical writing is the collection of 24 “Standard Histories”. Each Standard History was basically the history of one particular dynasty and its times, *written by the succeeding dynasty*. The interest of a new dynasty in compiling the history of the preceding dynasty lay, as mentioned earlier, in the need to justify the legitimacy of its own accession to the Imperial Throne. But in the process was created a unique historical record of a people and a civilisation, remarkable for the consistency and comprehensiveness of its coverage.

Although by tradition and veneration, the *Historical Records* of Sima Qian are considered the first of the Standard Histories, it was not the history of just one dynasty. The first of the real dynastic histories was the creative work of the 1st century AD historian Ban Gu, along with his father Ban Biao and his sister Ban Zhao. Ban Gu, living in the Later Han period, sought to write the history of the Former Han dynasty, following essentially the same format as Sima Qian with minor modifications. His was not initially an officially commissioned work. In fact, he was arrested by the Xianzong Emperor when it was reported that he was privately compiling a work of history! However, after his enterprising sister interceded on his behalf and arranged for the Emperor to read the partially completed draft, the Emperor was convinced of the importance of the project and in fact ordered Ban Gu to complete his work, which he did over the next 20 years. Later dynastic histories were mostly officially commissioned.

Following the downfall of the Han dynasty in the 3rd century A.D., the Empire several times broke up, and the line of succession to the Imperial Throne was not always clear. The interesting thing is that, even during these periods of disunion in China’s history, the tradition of writing dynastic histories was maintained in the different kingdoms that competed with each other for power. That is why there are 24 recognised Standard Histories, even though the number of dynasties that ruled over a united Chinese Empire was far less. Even after the Empire was finally overthrown in 1911, the succeeding Republican government sought to continue the tradition of the Standard Histories, and

had the history of the last (Qing) dynasty written up. However, this work has generally not been recognised as one of the 24 Standard Histories.

6.3.4 The Later Imperial Period

After a gap of more than 350 years following the collapse of the great Han dynasty, China was reunified under the founding emperor of the Sui dynasty in 689 AD. Thereafter, except for a period of 50 years of warfare after the end of the Tang dynasty (from 907 to 960), the unity of the Chinese empire was maintained in a more or less unbroken fashion for nearly one thousand years until the 20th century.

This was to have its reflection on the tradition of historiography in China. The major works of history were thereafter almost uniformly commissioned by the imperial rulers. They increasingly tended to be the work not of individual scholars, but of groups of historians organised under the imperial Bureau of Historiography. In fact, they could be considered as official compilations of historical information. This was the era of the great encyclopedic histories, in which the histories of different institutions achieved a breadth and comprehensiveness that far surpassed the treatment of these subjects in the monograph section of the Standard Histories. The encyclopedic histories served the need of scholars and officials in an era in which the range and complexity of state activity had greatly increased. The increasing importance in this period of the competitive civil service examinations, as the main route to enter officialdom, also increased the usefulness to scholars of works that gathered all relevant information on a particular subject in one place.

Despite the ponderous and somewhat bureaucratic nature of much of the work on History in the later imperial period, the Tang and particularly the Song periods were also a period of intellectual inquiry in the field of historiography. Scholars and intellectuals sought to challenge some of the formalism and rigidity in history writing and to break new ground.

The first work of critical historiography in China was that of the Tang dynasty scholar Liu Zhiji. He wrote a book, called simply *On History* (*Shi tong*), which directly addressed the question of how history was and should be written. The great historian of the Song period, Sima Guang (1019-1086), squarely confronted the question of how to deal with the problem of divergence of evidence when writing history. Although he did not directly challenge the dynastic history format, he managed to break out of its limitations in writing his *Comprehensive Mirror for the Aid of Government* (*Zizhi tongjian*). This monumental work provided a chronological account of 1362 years of China's history, from 403 BC till 959 AD, and was one of the most profoundly influential works of history of the later imperial period. Other historians also directly questioned the usefulness of breaking up history into dynastic chunks, and even felt that Sima Guang had not gone far enough in challenging it. They sought to fill the gaps by writing topical histories and institutional histories that did not observe the conventional periodisation based on dynasties.

Historians of the Song period, which saw a revival of the prestige of Confucianism after its partial eclipse during the heyday of Buddhism in China, were particularly concerned with understanding the underlying order of the past and with drawing the correct moral lessons from history. This was well articulated by Lu Ziqian, who wrote:

“Most people, when they examine history, simply look at periods of order and realize that they are ordered, periods of disorder and recognise their disorder, observe one fact and know no more than that one fact. But is this real observation of history? You should picture yourself actually in

the situation, observe which things are profitable and which dangerous, and note the misfortunes and ills of the times. Shut the book and think for yourself. Imagine that you are facing these various facts and then decide what you think ought to be done. If you look at history in this way, then your learning will increase and your intelligence improve. Then you will get real profit from your reading.”

After the Song period, we do not find the same breadth of intellectual inquiry among historians of imperial China. Nevertheless, the tradition of assiduously and meticulously writing history and of compiling and classifying historical works continued. In particular, the use of history and historical analogy to try and understand the problems of the day and to arrive at the right solutions to these problems remained a major preoccupation of Chinese scholars and intellectuals right till modern times.

6.4 HISTORICAL THEORIES

The writing of history always involves some theoretical framework or the other. Even those historians who claim complete neutrality take recourse to general principles to organise their material. History-writing in pre-modern China was no exception. Here we will discuss some of the theoretical bases of traditional Chinese historiography.

6.4.1 Dynastic Cycle

Traditional historiography was dominated by the concept of the dynastic cycle. According to Chinese tradition, the first ruling family of China were the Xia, who were overthrown by the Shang, who were replaced in turn by the Zhou, and so on. As the Chinese saw it, the rise and fall of dynasties followed a clearly defined pattern. The dynastic cycle theory proved useful to traditional historians in two ways. Firstly, it allowed them to deal with their past in manageable chunks. Few dynasties lasted more than 300 years, while some lasted just a few decades. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the dynastic cycle accorded well with the moral objectives of history writing. The rise and fall of dynasties was attributed to the personal moral qualities of the individual rulers. Invariably a dynasty's founding ruler or rulers were presented as men of great wisdom and ability, who put an end to disorder and laid the foundations for a period of general wellbeing. The last rulers were portrayed as weak and ineffective individuals, given to indulging themselves and letting the affairs of state slide into chaos. Hence, the founder of the *current* dynasty (the one that commissioned the writing of the earlier dynasty's history) emerged in a positive light as someone who put an end to the chaos and degeneration. He was considered to have received the “Mandate of Heaven” to rule from his unworthy predecessors. And so the cycle went on. It was a not so subtle warning to rulers to be conscientious in their duties, and to follow accepted conventions and norms of statecraft, so as not to lose their “Mandate of Heaven” to some challenger.

According to Fairbank, the dynastic cycle proved to be “a major block to the understanding of the fundamental dynamics of Chinese history”. In focusing on only short-term changes, it obscured the more fundamental and long-term changes that were taking place in Chinese society. By emphasising the repetitiveness of history, it obscured and denied the possibility of real change. It kept statesmen and scholars chained to the past, looking for clues to solving the dilemmas of the present in the ages gone by, because it was believed that every current problem had some precedent in earlier epochs.

This was to produce a crippling mind-set when China was confronted with spectacularly new and unprecedented problems, particularly in the 19th century. At the same time, Fairbank concedes, the dynastic cycle did have a kind of limited usefulness, particularly in showing how, within the great dynastic periods, administrative and fiscal weakness repeatedly interacted with challenges from foreign peoples to create periods of crisis, upheaval and foreign conquest.

6.4.2 ‘Continuous History’

The dynastic cycle framework had its critics even in traditional China. As mentioned earlier, particularly during the Tang and Song periods historians opposed its limitations, and sought to break out of it. Some like Sima Guang did not openly discard the dynastic framework, but the scope of his work transcended any one dynasty. Others like Zheng Qiao directly criticised the venerable historian Ban Gu for having started the process of writing dynastic histories, and openly espoused the notion of “continuous history”. Yuan Shu inaugurated the method of taking up one topic and writing about it “from beginning to end” without observing the limitations imposed by the dynastic framework. Ma Duanlin tried to strike a compromise by suggesting that while it could make sense to deal with political history in terms of the dynastic framework, the same could not be applied to the history of institutions. “To understand the reasons for the gradual growth and relative importance of institutions in each period,” he wrote, “you must make a comprehensive and comparative study of them from their beginnings to their ends and in this way try to grasp their development; otherwise you will encounter serious difficulties.” In general, one could say that later histories followed his approach, strictly following the dynastic principle in dealing with political developments, but adopting a more comprehensive treatment when it came to writing institutional history.

6.5 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE HISTORIOGRAPHY

As we can see, the Chinese historiographical tradition contained both elements that were similar to other great traditions of writing history, as well as some features that were quite unique and closely bound up with the distinctive features of Chinese civilisation as a whole. We can summarise the main features of this tradition as follows.

6.5.1 Official History

Chinese historiography was predominantly official historiography. This implies several things. Firstly, it was written almost exclusively by officials. Secondly, it was usually commissioned or sponsored by the rulers, particularly after the initial period. There were some exceptions to the rule. But “private history” (*sishi*), while it definitely existed and even enjoyed a certain respectability, never challenged the dominance of officially written history. Third, the content of historical writing largely reflected the concerns of administration, and more narrowly those of the ruling house and emperor. Fourth, the main sources on which history writing was based were official documents, to which the historians had relatively easy access since they themselves were officials. Sources so important to historians in other societies, such as land deeds, private contracts, litigation records, etc., were rarely used by traditional Chinese historians.

6.5.2 Normative History

Historiography was essentially normative, meaning that it was meant to serve as a guide to those who read it. We have already seen that the dynastic cycle pattern was meant

to convey a message to later rulers about how they should rule. However, the lessons were not just for the emperors. Every conscientious official faced with any problem in his area, whether about how to deal with troublesome foreigners or how to organise grain transport or how to curb banditry or rebellion, was expected to look into history to see how his predecessors had dealt with such problems. It was not just information that was sought in the books of history, but models of conscientiousness, moral uprightness and wisdom in the words and deeds of former rulers and officials, that could educate and inspire the scholars and officials of the day. A clever official could also seek to justify his actions to his superiors or emperor by quoting precedent.

6.5.3 Standard Format

The main works of history followed a remarkably consistent format. The dynastic histories and the “comprehensive histories” over the centuries contained on the whole remarkably similar sections and sub-sections. This has made it easier for later historians and scholars to navigate through the maze of information contained in them. A historian today, for example, doing research on a particular period of China’s past or a particular institution would be able to zero in on the relevant sections fairly quickly.

6.5.4 Objectivity and Integrity

From the time of the Grand Historian Sima Qian, it has been considered the duty of the historian to record the facts as objectively as possible. This is one of the remarkable paradoxes of traditional Chinese historiography, considering that the emphasis on official history and normative history would not be expected to support objectivity in historical writing. Nevertheless, no less authoritative a scholar than Charles Gardner has said that “an assumption of complete objectivity underlies the whole Chinese conception of historical writing.” The historian’s own individual personality and opinions were not meant to intrude into the material he was recording. Where the historian has seen fit to make his own, usually brief, comments, these are usually clearly demarcated from the rest of the text. In addition, the need to be true to his sources has meant that the very often the historian, rather than paraphrasing or rewriting something in his own words, would instead faithfully reproduce verbatim the passages from the texts on which his work was based. Far from being considered a form of plagiarism, this was considered to be the most natural and logical method of historical reconstruction. This method resulted in the distinctive “cut-and-paste” appearance of standard Chinese historical works, which often appear to be careful compilations or arrangements of previous writings rather than original works. While the “cut-and-paste” format occasionally makes for tiresome and lengthy reading, it has one major advantage. Many works, particularly from the early period of China’s history, which are no longer extant, are still not completely lost to us because long sections are to be found cited accurately in later, preserved, works of history.

6.6 SUMMARY

In conclusion, we can say that historians in imperial China, particularly after the time of the great Han historians, were very conscious that they were part of a great historiographical tradition. Sometimes, this curbed their freedom to experiment, because they felt obliged to follow the patterns set by their venerated predecessors. But in another sense, it resulted in a truly remarkable record of the past, whose consistency and continuity and general reliability were rarely matched by other societies or civilisations. All dynasties, great or small, of native Chinese or alien origin, were morally obliged to keep up the tradition, and to not allow a break in the continuity of the historiographical

tradition. The sense that they were part of a great tradition added to the prestige of historians and their craft in China. It contributed to the reverence for History and for the striking importance attached to it in the classical tradition.

6.7 CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR DYNASTIES

Shang	ca.1751 – 1122 BC
Zhou	1122 – 221 BC
Western Zhou	1122 – 771 BC
Eastern Zhou	770 – 256 BC
Spring and Autumn period	722-468 BC
Warring States period	403-221 BC
Qin	221 – 203 BC
(first unification of China)	
Han	202 BC – AD 220
Former Han	202 BC – AD 9
Later Han	AD 23 – AD 220
Period of Disunion	220 – 589
Sui	589 – 618
Tang	618 – 906
Five Dynasties	907 – 960
Song	960 – 1279
Northern Song	960 – 1126
Southern Song	1127 – 1279
Yuan (Mongols)	1260 – 1368
Ming	1368 – 1644
Qing (Manchus)	1644 – 1911

6.8 A BRIEF NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION

Various systems have been used to transcribe Chinese names into Western languages. The one used here is the *pinyin* system which is now widely recognised as the standard form of romanisation. In this system, words are pronounced more or less as they seem, with the following notable exceptions which the student may find in the above text:

- 1 “qi” is pronounced like “chee” (with a hard, aspirated “ch” sound)
- 1 “xi” is pronounced like “shee” (with a sharp, hissing “sh” sound)
- 1 “ian” is pronounced like “yen” (hence, “Qian” is like “Chien”)
- 1 “si” is pronounced like “suh” (somewhat like “sir” without the “r”)
- 1 “song” is pronounced like “soong” (with a short “oo” sound)
- 1 “shi” is pronounced like “shr”

6.9 EXERCISES

- 1) How did Confucianism influence the writing of history in ancient China?
- 2) Discuss the development of historical writing in pre-modern China.
- 3) Write a note on the theories involved in writing of history in pre-modern China.
- 4) What were the distinctive features of traditional Chinese historiography?

6.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

William Theodore de Bary (comp.), *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol.1 (New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1960)

Charles S. Gardner, *Chinese Traditional Historiography* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1961)

John King Fairbank and Edwin Reischauer, *East Asia : The Great Tradition* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1958, 1960)

Etienne Balasz, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1964)

Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History : A Manual* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press, 2000)

J, Meskill (ed.), *The Pattern of Chinese History : Cycles, Development, or Stagnation?* (Boston, Heath, 1965)