Searching for Chinese history journals online

Ka Wai Fan
Chinese Civilisation Center, City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Abstract
Purpose – Based on the author’s experience, this paper aims to provide tips for finding Chinese history journals on the web.
Design/methodology/approach – After reviewing a total of four portals, the author points out the challenge faced by searchers. The author provides six searching tips, including terms, databases, organizations, institutes, universities and publishers, for finding Chinese history journals online.
Findings – By following the hints provided by the author, most Chinese history journals can be found online and readers will be able to find full-text articles or citations that will facilitate their research. In addition, examples are given to show how to catalogue online Chinese journals when building up an electronic library.
Practical implications – Contains very useful hints for librarians and researchers planning to build an electronic library for China studies.
Originality/value – This paper offers practical help to librarians and researchers building up web sites or electronic libraries for China studies.
Keywords History, Electronic journals, Catalogues, China

Paper type Viewpoint

Introduction
With an economy scheduled to surpass Japan’s in the next decade, a growing political influence, and artists, writers, and performers appearing with greater frequency on international stages, China’s significance has never been greater. If such early innovations as the compass, gunpowder, silk textiles, paper, and moveable-type print established the country’s importance centuries ago, a huge manufacturing capacity and the remarkable hybrid of socialism with a market economy continue to hold the world’s attention. The most modern of research tools can help us to see the continuities between tradition and modernity in contemporary China.

The worldwide web is increasingly used in conjunction with research, to share information, and to publicize projects and organizations (Herring, 2001). At the same time, the ability to sift through the ever-increasing amounts of information made available online to find reliable and accurate data is becoming more important every day. More scholars, researchers, and students obtain academic information from internet resources every day to further their own research. Fairly quickly they understand that the rigorous standards of academic scholarship cannot be satisfied by a simple Yahoo! search: the vast quantity of undifferentiated material such a search yields must frustrate those longing for truth.

Instead of relying on the well-known commercial search engines, scholars turn to websites maintained by academic institutions that guarantee a degree of reliability. Sites maintained by academic journals permit one to search for the newest research...
information, whether in Chinese, English, or Japanese. Such sites also help scholars obtain more information about which journals might be appropriate publishers of their own work. In what follows, tips, based on my experience, are provided for finding Chinese history journals on the web. The URLs for the portals, journals, databases and organizations are provided in Appendix 1.

Four portals
After trying a number of Chinese history searches on a range of academic sites, I have concluded that four popular portal sites – one Chinese and three English – are very good. The Shixue Lianxian site, maintained by Professor Liu Zenggui of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, was established in March 1997. Liu has divided online Chinese history resources into 15 categories, of which one is journals. In addition to providing links to Chinese history websites in Chinese, English, and Japanese, Shixue Lianxian provides links to online journals of world history and Chinese history, though unfortunately the journals are only categorized by language and it only has 25 Chinese history journals.

The second portal, Asian & Pacific Studies Electronic Journals, is part of the World-Wide Web Virtual Library. The site provides links to 121 journals, addressing the entirety of Asian studies, not only Chinese history. The site lists all journals in alphabetical order: thanks to the large number of titles, this is quite time-consuming and a bit frustrating for the novice researcher.

The Internet Guide for Chinese Studies, edited by Hanno Lecher, is also part of the World-Wide Web Virtual Library. The site provides links to ten journals in its history category, identifying comprehensive journals first and then the journals that focus on specific periods, in chronological order. It is often helpful to search through the listings in the non-history categories, since many specialized journals publish material of interest to scholars of history.

A portal maintained by Professor Chen Shuang (PRC scholars), Guo Shi Tan Wei, provides links to a number of PRC journals and helpfully identifies their focus with categories such as “Ming-Qing period”, “historical geography”, and so on.

The classification of history journals is not always easy. Many publish articles from a range of periods and few are rigorous about publishing only in such neatly defined fields as economic history and intellectual history. A single journal might just as easily be called a history journal as a sociology journal. As a result some portal sites list only a small number of journals in their history section. Secondly, while many journals publish research on Chinese history, the journals’ names rarely include the word “history”. If you are not already familiar with the journals it can be challenging to identify those that might be useful. Finally, journals devoted to Chinese history are published in many different areas, in different languages, using different writing systems, all of which must be interpreted by the computer one uses to view the sites: this can be a challenge.

Searching tips
Terms
While in Asia the materials for which you will be searching are always categorized under “history”, in Western countries you will need to consider such rubrics as “East
Asian”, “Asian studies”, and “sinology”. I have listed below a number of the leading English-language journals publishing Chinese history articles:

- Asian Studies Newsletter,
- Newsletter of East Asian Art and Archaeology,
- The European Association of Chinese Studies Newsletter,
- East Asian History,
- Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,
- European Journal of East Asian Studies,
- Journal of Asian History,
- Asia Major,
- Journal of Asian Studies; and

On Japanese websites, “Tōyō shi” and “Toho shi” mean East Asian history and Oriental history, respectively. At most Japanese universities Chinese history is studied in the “Department of Tōyō shi”. The most prestigious Chinese history journal in Japan is Tōyō shi kenkyū (East Asian History Studies). (Fan, 2003) I have listed below a number of the leading Japanese-language journals publishing Chinese history articles:

- Eastern Studies,
- Toho Gakuho,
- The Journal of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko,
- Acta Asiatica: Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture,
- Oriental Culture,
- The Memories of the Institute of Oriental Culture; and

When searching for Chinese history journals on Chinese websites, it is essential to include the term "history" in the search. Additionally, there is no reason not to add "culture" and "studies". In Hong Kong three journals largely devoted to Chinese history all have the word “culture” or “studies” in their titles: Chinese Culture Quarterly, Journal of Chinese Studies and Journal of Oriental Studies. Finally, including in one’s search the names of imperial China’s dynasties, such as Han, Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing, also produces fruitful results.

**Databases**

Online databases available by subscription are another excellent means of locating Chinese history journals. WangFang Database provides subscribers with full-text searchability of a large number of Chinese-language journals. While most of this site’s offerings are in the science field, the text of eight history journals, including Qingshi yanjiu (Studies in Qing History) and Shi xue yue kan (Historical Monthly), is also available to subscribers; tables of contents may be searched by non-subscribers for free.
China National Knowledge Infrastructure permits journal articles published in mainland China to be searched for a fee. The journals are categorized according to topic and some contents are available to the public for free. If one searches the site from a computer at a subscribed library, journal articles can be downloaded and printed. (Note that the subscriber must first download the CNKI reader software.) By my count, the database includes more than 65 history journals, such as Zhongguo shi yanjiu (Studies in Chinese History) and Lishi yanjiu (History Studies).

PerioPath: Index to Chinese Periodical Literature was created and is maintained by the National Central Library, Taiwan. PerioPath collects articles published between 1994 and the present in approximately 2,600 Chinese-language and Western-language periodicals published in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. A total of 157 Chinese history and geography journals are divided into 25 categories. The database is searchable by article title, author, class code (i.e. category), keyword, journal title, and publication date. The site provides access to most of the important Chinese history journals published in Taiwan, including Xin shixue (New History), the Newsletter for Ming Studies, and Ming-Qing Studies.

JSTOR (Journal STORage), funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is a digital archive of over 100 core scholarly journals. It covers 15 subjects, mainly in the humanities and social sciences. Users at participating institutions can search, browse, save, and print any article from the collection. JSTOR’s Asian studies section includes three Chinese history journals: Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, the Journal of Asian Studies, and the Far Eastern Quarterly.

Organizations
The aim of historical associations is to bring together scholars who share research interests, to organize meetings, to publish professional newsletters and journals, and to exchange scholarly information. Websites maintained by historical organizations often provide links to their online journals. Below are listed the names of the leading academic associations that address Chinese history, followed by the titles of the journals they publish.

- Association for Asian Studies – Journal of Asian Studies and Asian Studies Newsletter;
- The Society for East Asian Archaeology – The Journal of East Asian Archaeology;
- The Society for the Study of Early China – Early China;
- The Early Medieval China Group – Early Medieval China;
- The T’ang Studies Society – T’ang Studies;
- The Society for Sung, Yuan, and Conquest Dynasties – Journal of Song-Yuan Studies;
- The Society for Ming Studies – Ming Studies;
- Group for Ming Studies – Ming shi yanjiu (Studies in Ming History);
- The Japan Association for Modern China Studies – Gendai chugoku (Modern China);
Institutes
In mainland China and Taiwan there are official academic institutes devoted to the study of history. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan), located in Beijing, has an Institute of History and an Institute of Modern History. The Institute of History publishes Zhongguo shi yanjiu (Studies of Chinese History) and the Institute of Modern History publishes Jindaishi yanjiu (Studies of Modern Chinese History). A group at the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Zhongguo kexue yuan), the Institute for the History of the Natural Sciences, publishes Ziran ke xue shi yan jiu (Studies on the History of the Natural Sciences) and Zhongguo ke ji shi liao (Chinese Historical Materials on Science and Technology).

Taiwan’s preeminent research institute, Zhongyang yanjiu yuan (Academia Sinica), has two history institutes, the Institute of History and Philology and the Institute of Modern History, where scholars research China’s past from the ancient period to the Chinese Revolution. The former publishes the Bulletin of the Institute of Philology and History and Past and Present; the latter publishes the Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica, Research on Women in Modern Chinese History, and the Newsletter for Modern Chinese History. The Center for Chinese Studies, also based in Taiwan, publishes several renowned journals, including Chinese Studies and the Newsletter for Research in Chinese Studies. Both in Taiwan and in mainland China, art museums publish their own journals: the most important are the journals published by the Gugong Bowuguan (Palace Museum) in both areas.

Universities
In Taiwan many university history departments publish their own journals. Often the tables of contents of these journals can be viewed online and in some cases articles can be read and downloaded without charge. A partial list of Taiwanese universities that publish history journals includes National Taiwan University, National Taiwan Normal University, Soochow University, National Cheng Kung University, National ChengChii University, National ChungHsing University, and National Chung Cheng University. Hong Kong’s Lingnan University publishes its Lingnan Journal online free of charge.

Publishers
For business purposes, publishers see to it that their journals have websites. The portfolios of a number of big publishers, including The Netherlands’ Brill, have a staggering array of titles in the China field: Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity, European Journal of East Asian Studies, Historiography East and West, Journal of East Asian Archaeology, Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, T’oung Pao, and Nan Nu: Men, Women and Gender in Early and Imperial China. Cambridge
University Press publishes the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *The China Quarterly*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* and *Modern China Studies*. All of these titles can be searched on such subscription databases as Ingenta, SwetsWise and Academic Search Premier Publications.

**Conclusion**

Most Chinese history journals can now be found online, and by following the hints given above readers will be able to find full-text articles or citations that will facilitate their research. Chinese history journals can be divided into four types:

1. newsletters;
2. non-specialized;
3. period specific; and
4. thematic (for example, addressing disciplines such as archaeology, gender, history of science, medicine, religion, and historical geography).

Within each of the types are journals published in English, Chinese, and Japanese. Librarians designing online research resources for history researchers are encouraged to look carefully at online subscription services to avoid redundancy and gaps in their services. Since many journals are available online free of charge, librarians concerned with keeping costs down should encourage researchers to use these. When adding online journals and databases to the library catalogue, librarians ought to include the following: title, language, publisher, URL, e-mail, database (and whether the library is subscribed), and description. The description should indicate whether the website provides full-text searchability and readability or table of contents only, which issues are available and the date and number of the most recent issue (see Appendix 2).

**References**


**Appendix 1. Websites**

*Four portals*

- Asian & Pacific Studies Electronic Journals
- *Guo shi tan wei*
  URL: www.xiangyata.net
- Internet Guide for Chinese Studies
  URL: www.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/igcs/
- *Shixue Lianxian*
  http://saturn.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~liutk/shih/

References:


Terms

- Acta Asiatica: Bulletin of the Institute of Eastern Culture
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AA00016800.html
- Artibus Asiae: Journal of Asian Art and Archaeology
  http://inside.bard.edu/~louis/artibus/
- Asia Major
  URL: www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~asiamajor
- Asian Studies Newsletter
  URL: www.aasianst.org/catalog/nl.htm
- Chinese Culture Quarterly
  URL: www.cciv.cityu.edu.hk/publication/jiuzhou/content.php
- Contemporary China Studies
  URL: http://modernchina.rwx.jp/magazine.htm
- East Asian History
  URL: http://rspas.anu.edu.au/eah
- Eastern Studies
  URL: www.tohogakkai.com/tohogakumokuroku.htm
- European Journal of East Asian Studies
  URL: http://iris.ingentaselect.com/vl = 1138569/cl = 40/nw = 1/rpsv/cw/brill/15680584/cont1.htm
- Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
  Database: JSTOR, www.jstor.org/journals/00730548.html
- Journal of Asian History
  URL: www.indiana.edu/~jahist
- Journal of Asian Studies
  URL: www.aasianst.org/catalog/jas.htm
  Database: JSTOR, www.jstor.org/journals/00219118.html
- Journal of Chinese Studies
  URL: www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/journal
- Journal of East Asian Archaeology
  URL: http://iris.ingentaselect.com/vl = 1138569/cl = 40/nw = 1/rpsv/cw/brill/13876813/cont1.htm
- Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
  URL: http://iris.ingentaselect.com/vl = 1138569/cl = 40/nw = 1/rpsv/cw/brill/00224995/cont1.htm
  Database: JSTOR
- Journal of Oriental Studies
  URL: www.hku.hk:8400/chinese/jos
- Journal of T’ang Studies
  URL: www.tangrf.org/index03.htm
- Newsletter East Asian Art and Archaeology
  URL: www.umich.edu/~hartspe/NEAAA/issue75/75NEAAA.html
- Newsletter for Modern Chinese History
• **Newsletter for Research in Chinese Studies**  
  URL: http://ccs.ncl.edu.tw/paper_b.html

• **Oriental Culture**  
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AN00170835.html  
  URL: www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/pub/bunka.html

• **The European Association of Chinese Studies Newsletter**  
  URL: www.soas.ac.uk/eacs/newsli/index.htm

• **The Journal of Oriental Researchers**  
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AN00170019.html

• **The Journal of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko**  
  URL: www.nii.ac.jp/kiyo-portal/sokuho/articles/VAN00169858.html

• **The Memories of the Institute of Oriental Culture**  
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AN00170926.html

• **Toho Gakuho, Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University**  
  URL: www.zinbun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/db/gakuho.html  
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AN00167025.html

**Databases**

• **China National Knowledge Infrastructure**  
  URL: www.cnki.com.cn/index.htm

• **JSTOR**  
  URL: www.jstor.org/jstor/

• **New History**  
  Database: PerioPath  
  URL: http://saturn.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~huangkc/nhist

• **PerioPath: Index to Chinese Periodical Literature**  
  URL: www2.read.com.tw/cgi/ncl3/m_ncl3

• **WangFang Database**  
  www.wanfangdata.com.cn

• **Zhongguo shi yan jiu**  
  Database: China National Knowledge Infrastructure

• **Zhongguo shi yan jiu dong tai (Newsletter for Study of Chinese History)**  
  URL: www.cass.cn/y_qkzz/qkzz_06il/qkzz_06_05.htm (Introduction page)  
  Database: China National Knowledge Infrastructure

**Organizations**

• **American Oriental Society**  
  URL: www.umich.edu/~aos

• **Association for Asian Studies**  
  URL: www.asianst.org

• **Bulletin of the Sinological Society of Japan**  
  URL: http://kiyo.nii.ac.jp/articles/ncid/AN00195246.html  
- Early China
  URL: www.lib.uchicago.edu/earlychina/publications/ecjournal
- Gendai chugoku
  URL: http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp/jamcs/back-number.html
- Group for Ming Studies
  URL: http://staff.pccu.edu.tw/~chihhowu/
- Early Medieval China
  URL: www.clas.ufl.edu/users/cchenna/journal
- East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine
  URL: www.uni-tuebingen.de/sinologie/eastm
- Journal of Song-Yuan Studies
  URL: www.humanities.uci.edu/eastasian/SungYuan/JSYS/
- Journal of the American Oriental Society
  URL: www.umich.edu/%7Eaos/frntmtr.htm
- Late Imperial China
  URL: www.press.jhu.edu/journals/late_imperial_china/
- Ming shi yanjiu
  URL: http://staff.pccu.edu.tw/~chihhowu/new_page_20.htm
- Ming Studies
  URL: http://cla.umn.edu/farmer/ming.htm
- Modern China: An International Quarterly of History and Social Science
  URL: www.sagepub.com/journal.aspx?pid=59
  Database: JSTOR
  URL: www.isop.ucla.edu/eas/modchina/
- T’ang Studies
  URL: www.colorado.edu/ealld/tss/Tang.htm
  URL: www.tangrf.org/data/articles/a02/103.html
- The Early Medieval China Group
  URL: www.usc.edu/isd/archives/arc/libraries/eastasian/china/earlymedieval.html
- The International Institute for Asian Studies
  URL: http://iias.leidenuniv.nl
- The International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter
  URL: www.iias.nl/iiasn/newslet.html
- The Japan Association for Modern China Studies
  URL: http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp/jamcs/index.html
- The Journal of Historical Studies on Chinese Women
  URL: http://homepage3.nifty.com/chinesewomen/backnumbers.html
- The Society for East Asian Archaeology
  URL: www.ancienteastasia.org/archives/seaa.htm
- The Society of Historical Studies on Chinese Women
  URL: http://homepage3.nifty.com/chinesewomen/hyoushi.html
- The Society for the Study of Early China
  URL: www.lib.uchicago.edu/earlychina/
Institutes

- Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology
  URL: www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/~bihp/
- Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica
  URL: www.sinica.edu.tw/imh/book/bk-pub2-1.html
- Chinese Studies
  URL: http://ccs.ncl.edu.tw/paper_b.html
- Palace Museum Journal
  URL: www.dpm.org.cn/china/phweb/asp/yuankan.asp
- The Center for Chinese Studies
  URL: http://ccs.ncl.edu.tw/
- The Chinese Academy of Social Science
  URL: www.cass.net.cn/webnew/index.asp
- The Institute for History of the Natural Sciences
  URL: www.ihns.ac.cn/
- The Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica
  URL: www.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/
- The Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica
  URL: www.sinica.edu.tw/imh/index.html

Universities

- History Department, National Chen Kung University
  URL: www.ncku.edu.tw/%7Ehistory/chinese/
- History Department, National ChengChi University
  URL: www.history.nccu.edu.tw/
- History Department, National Chung Cheng University
  URL: www.nchu.edu.tw/%7Ehistory/page1.htm
- History Department, National Taiwan University
  URL: www.ms.cc.ntu.edu.tw/~history/
- History Department, National Taiwan Normal University
  URL: www.his.ntnu.edu.tw
- History Department, Soochow University
  URL: www.scu.edu.tw/history
- Lingnan Journal
  URL: http://lib1000.lib.edu.hk/etext/lnuj/

Publishers

- Brill
  URL: www.brill.nl
- Cambridge University Press
  URL: http://uk.cambridge.org
Appendix 2. sample descriptions

Example 1

Chinese Studies

Language: Chinese and English
Publisher: Center for Chinese Studies, Taiwan
URL: http://ccs.ncl.edu.tw/paper.html
E-mail: lckeng@msg.ncl.edu.tw
Description: Full-texts free download from Vol. 18 No. 1 (June 2000) to Vol. 21 No. 2 (December 2003). Tables of contents from all issues.

The Center, managed by the National Central Library, promotes Chinese studies, encourages cooperation and exchange among Sinologists in Taiwan and abroad, and provides research services. Chinese Studies is an international periodical with a focus on Chinese literature, history, and philosophy, written in both Chinese and English. Chinese Studies is a semi-annual publication, with issues coming out each June and December. Its content consists of articles, issues, and book reviews.

Example 2

Journal of Asian Studies

Language: English
Publisher: The Association for Asian Studies
URL: www.aasianst.org/catalog/jas.htm
E-mail: jasianst@umn.edu
Database: JSTOR (URL: www.jstor.org/journals/03636917.html), subscribed
Description: Selected articles free download. Tables of contents from Vol. 60 No. 1 (February 2001) to Vol. 63 No. 2 (May 2004).

The Association for Asian Studies, publisher of the Journal of Asian Studies, is the largest society of its kind in the world. The Association aims to “facilitate contact and an exchange of information among scholars to increase their understanding of East, South, and Southeast Asia”. Journal of Asian Studies publishes articles on topics involving the history, arts, social sciences, philosophy, and contemporary issues of East, South, and Southeast Asia, and has a large book review section.

(Ka Wai Fan is a full-time Lecturer in the Chinese Civilisation Center at the City University of Hong Kong as well as a part-time Assistant Professor in the School of Chinese Medicine at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He received his PhD, MPhil, and BA all from the Department of History, Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research interests include the history of Chinese medicine and ancient Chinese history. He has written several publications on both Chinese medicine and Chinese history. He can be contacted at: cikwfan@cityu.edu.hk)