

PAAS 151 – MODERN CHINESE CULTURE

Journal Article/Book Chapter Review (20%) – Due Monday February 11th

Write a 700 word critical review of an academic journal article or book chapter relevant to the course. The word count does not include references or footnotes.

Purpose

The purpose of the critical review is to interpret, challenge and analyze the text of an academic journal article or academic book chapter. A critical review goes beyond summarizing the content of a work. It should evaluate and critique the ideas, findings (or results) and conclusion(s). A critical position does not necessarily embrace a negative judgment – rather it inspects the writer's claims.

Selecting the article or book chapter

You are expected to find one academic journal article or book chapter focusing on a topic relevant to PAAS 151. The item must be published in English in a peer reviewed academic journal or must appear in an edited (or solely authored) academic book from a reputable publisher. Some of the articles and book chapters (or sections) from the course reading list are suitable for the review as indicated.

Alternatively, you can select your own article directly from a good peer reviewed academic journal. See the Reading List for further information about accessing relevant titles. Be careful to select an academic article or academic book chapter and not a book review or editorial introduction.

Articles selected from the *Economic and Political Weekly* or *World Literature Today* are not acceptable.

How to write your review

Read the article/chapter carefully and very briefly summarize the content. What is the purpose? What are the main issues? What theories or concepts does the author refer to? What is (are) the central research question(s)? What method(s) does the author use to answer the research question(s)? What are the conclusions?

Next, critically analyze the key arguments of the article or chapter. For example: What are the key strengths (or shortcomings) in the author's reasoning? Can you identify the author's assumptions? Do you agree with the conclusions? Are there important matters that have been avoided? Is there a problem in the argument? Are the main points being over- or under-stated? Are examples and illustrations effective? These are the types of questions that will facilitate your critical analysis of the article or chapter. A close reading of the text and an understanding of the main points is necessary for your critical evaluation.

Finally, you should synthesize the various arguments and critiques of your review. Is the article persuasive, and why (or why not)? The best reviews will also refer to background knowledge from your own experiences or from other sources.

Reference(s) and citations

Provide the full bibliographic reference of the article or book chapter – see the course reading list for examples of the appropriate format. You may use short quotes from the original text to support your arguments or illustrate your points – these will count towards the 700 words – but please ensure they are correctly cited in your review. You are not required to use references other than the piece you're reviewing, but if you do, these must be fully and correctly cited.

You can use whichever citation style you prefer, but it must be applied consistently. Marks will be deducted if you use a citation style incorrectly or if you combine different styles. For further details and help with citations please see:
<http://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/index.php>

Organization of your review

There are different ways to organize the review, however in all cases the following key elements should be included:

1. Introduction – Introduce the article or chapter and highlight the key points, including the objectives and main argument of your review. These are usually found in the abstract (if there is one), or in the article or chapter introductions;
2. Summary – Briefly summarize the article/chapter;
3. Critique – This section is the main part of your review – use some of the propositions and recommendations described above to shape your critique;
4. Conclusion – Briefly pull together your key arguments and most important views of the article/chapter – bear in mind that your evaluation may adopt a positive and/or negative tone.

It is not necessary to include any headings in a short essay like this, but you might find it helpful to use the above headings as you write your review.

Grading

The marker will be looking for:

- ✓ Suitability of the article or book chapter
- ✓ Comprehension of the key arguments, theoretical perspectives and methods used by the author(s)
- ✓ Quality of the critique in relation to the propositions and recommendations described above
- ✓ Structure, organization and clarity of your arguments
- ✓ Evidence of ingenuity, and insights from your own experiences or other sources

Formatting: One inch margins, double spaced, minimum 12 point font

Academic integrity

Preparation of this review is subject to University protocols on plagiarism and cheating as described in the course outline. Offences will result in a grade of zero for this assignment, and may result in a failing grade for the course.

The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software or other platforms to assess the integrity of student work.

Practices that are NOT acceptable include:

- X** Persuading or paying someone else to write your essay, or otherwise presenting someone else's work as your own
- X** Downloading essays or articles from the internet and submitting part or whole as your own work
- X** Copying and pasting passages from books, journals, online resources or other sources, and presenting them as your own work
- X** Citing only a portion of a quotation, and presenting the remainder as your own work
- X** The use of an editor – either as an individual or service, whether paid or unpaid – who manipulates revises, corrects or alters your essay