

# Evidence, Argument and Story: Problems and Solutions in Social Science Story-telling Strategies

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Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University Yotsuya Campus

How should we establish and interpret a piece of evidence we have obtained in the interview or in archive? How could an argument be made based on the evidence we have? What are the problems we face in constructing an evidence-based story and what are the “solutions” we have to these problems? I have been doing research on both modern and historical China for twenty years, and have contemplated various methodological issues related to these questions. This talk, based largely on my recent research on the patterns of Chinese history, is going to share the lessons and insights that I have accrued over years, including the collection and interpretation of historical evidence and the construction of plausible arguments and stories.

**Dingxin Zhao** is professor of sociology at the University of Chicago. He is interested in political sociology broadly defined. His research covers the areas of social movements, nationalism, historical sociology and economic development. His interests also extend to sociological theory and methodology. Zhao's publications have appeared in journals such as *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, *Sociology*, *Mobilization*, *China Quarterly*, and *Problems of Post-Communism*. He has published an awards-winning book entitled *Power of Tiananmen* (2001) and two books in Chinese (*Social and Political Movements 2006*, and *Eastern Zhou Warfare and the Rise of the Confucian-Legalist State 2006*).

He is working on a project which, based on a comparison with the European experience, tries to explain China's precocious rise of bureaucracy around 7th BCE, unification in 221 BCE, the emergence of Confucian state around 140 BCE, and the pattern of the Chinese past in the last two millenniums.

(Lecture in English/No registration necessary)

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