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AI Use Policy

Narrative Layers: Unveiling and Rewriting East Asian Art

BA Seminar, Spring 2026, 6 ECTS

Dr. Stephanie Santschi

Chair of East Asian Art History, University of Zurich

Core Principle

This course examines how narratives about East Asian art are constructed, maintained, and can be rewritten. Your learning depends on developing the critical thinking skills necessary to recognize and analyze narrative construction. Using AI to shortcut these cognitive processes would directly undermine the course's fundamental objectives and prevent you from developing the historiographical awareness that is central to our work.

General Statement

Generative AI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and similar large language models) are prohibited for completing course assignments. This prohibition includes but is not limited to:

- Reading comprehension and summarization
- Research question and thesis development
- Argument construction and analysis
- All substantive writing (drafting, revising, improving content)
- Interpretation of artworks or scholarly texts

Limited exceptions exist only for:

- Basic spell-checking and grammar-checking (see specific guidelines below)
- Source discovery with strict verification requirements
- Translation of primary sources with acknowledged limitations
- Private study that doesn't contribute to graded work

Permission Scale Reference

All recommendations in this policy use the following six-level scale:

Level	Description
1. Prohibited	Not allowed under any circumstances
2. Strongly Discouraged	Allowed only with compelling justification and instructor approval
3. Discouraged	Not recommended; requires justification if used
4. Acceptable with Conditions	Permitted in specific contexts with documentation and verification
5. Acceptable	Generally permitted with standard documentation
6. Encouraged	Actively recommended as part of learning objectives

Activity-Specific Guidelines

1. Course Readings

AI Use: PROHIBITED

You must read all assigned materials independently without using AI for comprehension, summary, or interpretation.

Rationale: Learning to read critically and identify historiographical arguments is foundational to this course. AI summaries would prevent you from developing these essential skills.

Alternatives:

- Annotation exercises
- Peer reading groups
- Office hours for difficult concepts
- In-class discussions of challenging passages

2. Presentation Excerpt (Easter Break Assignment)

Topic Selection & Research Question

AI Use: PROHIBITED

You must develop your research question and thesis independently.

Rationale: Creating original research questions about narrative construction is core Create-level work. This intellectual creativity cannot be outsourced.

Source Discovery

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE WITH CONDITIONS

You may use AI tools to supplement (not replace) library database searches, with these requirements:

- Verify every source exists and is accessible
- Read all sources before including them in your bibliography
- Explain why each source is relevant to your specific question
- Prioritize library databases (JSTOR, Project MUSE) as your primary method

Positionality Reflection

AI Use: PROHIBITED

Your reflection on how your position shapes your research must be genuinely personal and reflective.

3. Oral Presentations

Content (Arguments, Analysis, Interpretation)

AI Use: PROHIBITED

All intellectual content must be your own original work.

Rationale: You cannot present or defend ideas generated by AI. Historiographical analysis must reflect your own thinking.

Structure/Organization

AI Use: STRONGLY DISCOURAGED

Organize your presentation independently. In exceptional cases where you're struggling significantly with structure after independent attempts and instructor consultation, you may request explicit instructor approval to use AI for organizational feedback only (not content generation).

Visual Materials

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE WITH CONDITIONS

- Use presentation software templates for layout
- All artwork images must be sourced from museums/databases—never AI-generated
- Include complete object information and citations
- Verify copyright/usage rights

Speaking Notes

AI Use: PROHIBITED

Develop your presentation delivery independently.

4. Seminar Paper

Academic Integrity Warning

Using AI to generate content you present as your own is plagiarism and violates UZH academic integrity standards.

All Substantive Content

AI Use: PROHIBITED

You may not use AI to generate, draft, revise, or "improve" any substantive content in your paper, including:

- Research questions and thesis
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Analysis and interpretation

- Discussion and synthesis
- Conclusions

Source Discovery

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE WITH CONDITIONS

(Same conditions as presentation excerpt)

Reading Sources

AI Use: PROHIBITED (for AI summarization)

You must read all sources directly to understand their historiographical arguments.

Citation Management

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE

You may use citation management software (Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote) to organize sources and format citations. Review all auto-formatted citations for accuracy.

Spell-Check & Grammar-Check ONLY

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE (with critical distinctions)

ACCEPTABLE:

- Microsoft Word spell-check and grammar-check
- Grammarly (free version, basic corrections only)
- LanguageTool (basic corrections only)

PROHIBITED:

- Grammarly Premium's "rewrite" or "tone" features
- Any AI feature that generates new text or restructures sentences
- ChatGPT, Claude, or similar LLMs for any editing purpose

Requirements:

- Review each suggestion individually—don't auto-accept
- Maintain your own voice and style
- Understand corrections so you learn from them

Translation of Primary Sources

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE WITH CONDITIONS

If you access sources in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean through AI translation:

- Acknowledge limitations explicitly in your paper
- Cross-check with published translations when available
- Consult with native speakers or language experts when possible
- Use multiple translation tools and compare results
- Be especially cautious with nuanced passages
- Prioritize published scholarly translations

5. Museum Visit (Session 2)

Object Information Lookup

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE WITH CONDITIONS

You may look up basic object information during the visit, but focus primarily on direct observation.

Analyzing Museum Narratives

AI Use: PROHIBITED

Apply course concepts independently to analyze how the museum constructs narratives.

6. Private Study (Not Contributing to Graded Work)

AI Use: ACCEPTABLE TO ENCOURAGED

You may use AI for:

- Self-quizzing on concepts
- Creating flashcards
- Exploring preliminary ideas
- Testing understanding

Requirements:

- Cross-check information with course materials
- Don't rely exclusively on AI
- Verify accuracy before trusting information

Declaration Requirements

All assignments must include a Statement of Independent Work confirming AI use compliance.

Standard Declaration

"I hereby declare that I have completed this work independently and without the use of unauthorized aids. Generative AI tools are aids that must be fully documented. I am aware that I bear full responsibility for any AI-generated output that I have used, and I assure that this declaration of AI use is complete."

Specific Declarations by Activity

Presentation Excerpt:

"I developed my research question and thesis statement independently without AI assistance. I wrote my positionality reflection independently. [If applicable: I used [Tool] to supplement source discovery on [date] and verified all sources independently through library databases.]"

Presentation:

"All analytical content, arguments, and interpretations in my presentation are my own original work. All images are sourced from legitimate collections and properly cited. I did not use AI to generate any visual content or substantive content."

Seminar Paper:

"All written content in this paper is my own original work. I did not use AI tools to generate, draft, revise, or improve any substantive content. I read all sources directly and independently. [If applicable: I used [Tool] for spell-checking and grammar-checking only / I used [citation management software] for citation formatting / I used [AI translation tool] to access sources in [language] on [date] and acknowledge translation limitations.]"

Citation Standards

Follow [KGOA Style Guide](#) for all citations. If you use AI translation tools, cite appropriately.

Academic Integrity

Violations of this policy constitute academic dishonesty and will result in:

- Zero on the assignment
- Potential failing grade for the course
- Referral to faculty academic integrity procedures

If you're unsure whether a specific use case is permitted, ask the instructors before proceeding.

Equity Note

Per UZH principles, no AI tools requiring personal data at login/registration or incurring costs will be required for this course. All required research can be completed using library resources and freely available tools.

Pedagogical Rationale

This policy reflects established pedagogical principles:

Bloom's Taxonomy: Your course requires higher-order thinking (Analyze, Evaluate, Create). AI use for these cognitive processes prevents skill development.

Cognitive Apprenticeship: As developing scholars, you're building expertise in historiographical analysis. This requires practicing the thinking itself, not observing AI outputs.

SAMR Model: Technology should enhance learning, not bypass it. This policy allows AI where it provides genuine augmentation without undermining learning objectives.

Course-Specific: A course about narrative construction requires you to construct your own narratives and understand how that process works. AI shortcuts would be particularly counterproductive to this meta-cognitive goal.

Questions?

Consult with Dr. Santschi during office hours or via email before using any AI tool if you're uncertain whether it's permitted for your specific use case.

Contact:

Dr. Stephanie Santschi: stephanie.santschi@khist.uzh.ch