A Bamboo Event:
Re-evaluating Early Chinese Culture Through Excavated Texts

The newly revealed bamboo-strip texts from the Shanghai Museum publications provide scholars with a fresh glimpse of the society and intellectual culture of China’s classical period, the Warring States period (5th-3rd c. BCE). This workshop aims to clarify the overarching significance of particular texts from the Shanghai cache in light of the received textual tradition. Scholars will point out specific areas in which interpretation becomes problematic, offering strategies for reading and deciphering the Chu script as well as techniques for approaching such manuscripts in general. The collaborative format of the workshop will provide even the most renowned specialists an opportunity to work with others and gain fresh perspectives into specific textual problems and their possible solutions.

Five different texts will be presented and discussed over the course of two days. Speakers will explain why the chosen text is significant, guide participants through a passage of the text in question, addressing specific issues of interpretation and possible solutions, and show how the text challenges received understandings of religion, philosophy, and the arts during the Warring States period.

MAY 17, 2010

9 a.m. — noon
Text 1: “Heng xian”
Erica Brindley, Penn State
Xing Wen, Dartmouth College
Matthias Richter, University of Colorado

2 p.m. — 4 p.m.
Text 2: “Fanwu liuxing”
Lai Guolong, University of Florida
Scott Cook, Grinnell College

4 p.m. — 5 p.m.
Text 3: “Rongchengshi”
Sarah Allan, Dartmouth College

MAY 18, 2010

9 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.
Text 4: “Kongzi shilun”
William Baxter, University of Michigan
Constance Cook, Lehigh University
Lin Suching, Academia Sinica, Taiwan
Anne Kinney, University of Virginia

2:30 p.m. — 4:30 p.m.
Text 5: “Zhong gong”
Yan Shih-hsuan, Academia Sinica, Taiwan
Andrew Meyer, City University of New York

4:45 p.m. — 5:30 p.m.
Concluding Remarks

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