The Second Annual Society for the Study of Early China Conference

Time: 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Thursday, 27 March 2014
Location: Philadelphia Downtown Marriott (Room 307), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Please visit the website of the Society for the Study of Early China at www.earlychina.org. We urge you to become a member of the Society by subscribing to its journal, Early China. Please note that although the Society is pleased to hold this meeting in conjunction with the annual conference of the Association of Asian Studies, registration for the AAS event is not required to attend the SSEC Conference.

Organizers
Sarah Allan (Dartmouth College) – Chair, Society for the Study of Early China
Organizing committee: F. Janice Kam (Western Washington University), Andrew Meyer (Brooklyn College), Charles Sanft (University of Tennessee)

Schedule
Each presenter will have 20 minutes to speak followed by 10 minutes for questions.

Session 1
Constance Cook
0900 – 0930  Lei Chin-hau  “Tracing Diplomacy and Long-Distance Communication in the Western Zhou Period: A Case Study of the Pu He”
0930 – 1000  Paul Nicholas Vogt  “Reading the ‘Ritual Revolution’: An Inscriptional Approach to the History of Western Zhou Ritual”
1000 – 1030  Sun Yan  “Identity, Power and Material Culture of the Western Zhou: A Case Study of the Peng Lineage in Southern Shanxi”
1030 – 1045  Break

Session 2
Robin D.S. Yates
1045 – 1115  Wu Xiaolong  “A New View of Zhongshan Identity”
1115 – 1145  Sheri A. Lullo  “Facing Status & Authority: Toiletries and Making Up in Warring States and Han (5th c. BCE-3rd c CE) China”
1145 – 1215  Rens Krijgsman  “Textualized Memory: The Use of the ‘Yucong’ in Early Chinese Memory Culture”
1215 – 1345  Lunch

Session 3
Tse Wai Kit (Wicky)
1415 – 1445  Paul Fischer  “Early Ruist Pneumatic Self Cultivation”

Session 4
Sarah Allan
1530 – 1600  Robin D.S. Yates  “Women and the Law in Early Imperial China in the Light of New Archaeological and Textual Discoveries”
1630 – 1700  Tse Wai Kit (Wicky)  “‘Cutting Off the Enemy’s Supply Lines’ as a Strategy in Early Chinese Warfare”
1700 – 1730  Sarah Allan  SSEC Business meeting

Abstracts
1. “Tracing Diplomacy and Long-Distance Communication in the Western Zhou Period: A Case Study of the Pu He,” Lei Chin-hau (Academia Sinica)
The newly-discovered Pu He, a mid-Western Zhou bronze vessel, appears to be the only contemporary source recording a diplomatic mission and its exact itinerary from the Western Zhou era. As China was politically divided then, diplomacy played an essential role in regulating inter-state relations and thus helped facilitate the functioning of the political system and consolidate the ruling structure. However, the traditionally used textual and archaeological approaches are not applicable to the study of ancient diplomacy. Available information about diplomacy in transmitted texts mostly came from later period and were of a normative nature. Moreover, as diplomacy left no physical traces, it also defies any chance of being studied archaeologically. This presentation thus argues that the Pu He, which was cast by an Ying State envoy commemorating his diplomatic trip to the Xing State in its inscription, was of particular significance. It not only testifies to the existence of diplomacy between regional states but also offers insights into the mechanism of long-distance communication in the Western Zhou period.


The work of Rawson and von Falkenhausen on Western Zhou bronze vessels has disseminated the influential idea that a “ritual revolution” or “ritual reform,” a systemic change in the participatory model of elite ancestral ritual, took place in the middle-late Western Zhou era. The inscriptions have, however, further detail to offer on the specific ritual techniques employed by the Zhou royal house at different times, and thus on the ideological strategies and motivations of the ritual revolution. Through a close reading of the records of specific rites in the bronze inscriptions, this presentation revisits and attempts to push forward the ritual revolution theory. The peak level of diversity in Western Zhou royal ritual, it argues, arrived under King Mu, after which a consolidation of techniques sought to reframe the Zhou king as the origin of vital resources and the natural nexus of authority. This reframing helped adapt the Zhou model of kingship to the crisis brought on by the obstruction of Zhou expansion. Changes in the vocabulary of the inscriptions hint, however, that it may also have caused a rupture between royal and non-royal approaches to ancestral offerings, affecting later, literary portrayals of this formative era in the history of early Chinese ritual.

3. “Identity, Power and Material Culture of the Western Zhou: Case Study of the Peng Lineage in southern Shanxi,” Sun Yan (Gettysburg College)

The excavation of Peng lineage cemetery at Hengshui, southern Shanxi, is one of the most fascinating archaeological discoveries of the Western Zhou period from the past decade. There, for the first time, archaeological work unveiled the material remains of a lineage-based, non-Ji polity in close proximity to Zhou’s regional state Jin. Through careful study of published data, this paper will discuss how the members of this non-Ji lineage presented their collective identity through material culture and why they made these choices. This research acknowledges the dynamic role the material culture played in the creation and transformation of individual and group identities. It will also argue that the identity of the Peng lineage was closely tied to its role in the power network within which the court, the Zhou regional state Jin, and other peer polities interacted in various ways. Bronze inscriptions, tomb artifacts, and mortuary practice are the primary evidence for this investigation.

4. “A New View of Zhongshan Identity,” Wu Xiaolong (Hanover College)

The origin and ethnic identity of the state of Zhongshan during the Warring State Period has been a much-debated issue in the study of Zhongshan history and received much attention since the excavation of the
tombs of two Zhongshan kings in the 1970s and 80s. Although it is now widely accepted that Zhongshan was the continuation of the earlier Xianyu, examination of Zhongshan material culture and burial practices in their own light suggests the need to reconsider this view. This paper analyzes minor tombs and associated artifacts in the state of Zhongshan, including those excavated recently in the cemeteries in and around its capital Lingshou, and those in the Zhongshan territory beyond the capital. Starting from the middle Warring States Period, when the capital Lingshou was built around 380 BCE, the structure of the tombs in this area and their furnishings experienced drastic changes. These changes brought the Zhongshan mortuary practice and material culture closer to those of the three Jin states (Wei, Zhao, and Han) in the Central Plain area. This presentation suggests that those changes could have been caused by the arrival of immigrants from other states and a new demographic makeup of this region, rather than by the effects of the sinicization of the Xianyu.

5. “Facing Status & Authority: Toiletries and Make Up in Warring States and Han (5th c. BCE-3rd c CE) China,” Sheri A. Lullo (Union College)
The documentary record for early China indicates that social status was presented via the adorned body by means of clothing and accoutrements of rank. Such notions are confirmed in the archaeological record of the Warring States period through the Han dynasty (5th c. BCE-3rd c. CE) where, for example, rich fabrics and items of clothing (when preserved), official caps, swords and knives have been found surrounding high ranking males and females. Many of these individuals were also buried with organized and sometimes extensive sets of toiletries. Stowed in lacquered boxes, these sets include items such as mirrors, combs, brushes, tweezers, and cosmetic powders, which suggest time-consuming routines for the maintenance of elaborate ideals of beauty. Such ideals were often linked with high status in both the pictorial and documentary records. This paper seeks to extend our perception of the adorned body by considering the face and hair as part of the rhetoric of status and authority during the Warring States and through the Han Dynasty. Specific examples of toilet sets found in burials of present-day Jiangsu, Shandong, and Hubei provinces, among others, will be introduced in order to argue for a more embodied sense of wealth and prestige in early imperial China.

The Guodian Yucong, or “Thicket of Sayings,” manuscripts have been variously classified as collections of sayings or as exercises in logical argumentation. However, the implications of compiling knowledge and its results for the usage of these texts are not clearly understood. This is crucial because the act of bringing together previously circulating text into a compilation dislodges text from its previous – oral or written – context, and imbues it with new functions and generates new meanings. This paper proposes to examine the usage of compilations from a comparative perspective. Through analyzing the material properties of the manuscripts and the structural qualities of their texts, this paper explores how and why Thicket of Sayings textualized memory and what this implies for its possible uses. Building on theory developed for comparable cases, this paper explores how Early Chinese compilations such as Thicket of Sayings operate within a memory culture. In particular, their qualities as instructional texts and mnemonic aides in oral debate and argument construction show that these compilations were critical in the development and generation of early texts and the transmission of knowledge.

7. “Masters, Masters Quotations, and Masters Texts: A Comparative Survey,” Michael Hunter (Yale University)
This paper shares some of the results of my comparative survey of masters quotations in early sources, including quotations attributed to Confucius, his disciples, Laozi, Mozi, Mengzi, and Guanzi. After a brief
discussion of the methodology used to identify such quotations, I then map the distribution of this material across the early corpus and also measure the degree of overlap between the quotations and the received sources most closely associated with these figures (the Laozi for Laozi, the Mengzi for Mengzi, etc.). Based on this analysis, I argue that there were significant differences with respect to how different masters were quoted in the early period, with the quotations of some masters depending more heavily on known written traditions than others. Perhaps the most striking such difference is that between Kongzi, whose earliest quotations exhibit very little correspondence with the Analects or any other known source, and Laozi, whose quotations parallel material in the received Laozi roughly 75% of the time, a number that is remarkably consistent over the course of the early period. Moreover, wherever a Laozi quotation does not parallel the received Laozi, more often than not the passage in question features Laozi in conversation with Kongzi. In other words, Laozi quotation was generally rooted in Laozi quotation except when Laozi was pulled into Kongzi’s orbit as a character in the comparatively dynamic, source-neutral practice of Kongzi quotation. I conclude the paper with some methodological reflections on the study of the Warring States masters.

8. “Early Ruist Pneumatic Self Cultivation,” Paul Fischer (Western Kentucky University)
Pre-Qin Confucians recommended several ways to cultivate oneself (修身) into a better human being. Scholarly discussion of such self-cultivation usually focuses on ritual (禮) or inner nature (性). In this paper I first give a much broader analysis of early Ruist self-cultivation methods. I then focus on what is probably the least-studied of all: pneumatic (氣) cultivation. Although Nei ye (Inner training), the received version of which certainly deals with pneumatic cultivation, is listed as a Ruist text in the Han History “Literature Record” (漢書 藝文志), most scholars classify it as Daoist. I therefore propose the fragmentary edition (殘書) of the Gongsun Nizi 公孫尼子 as the first extant example of Ruist pneumatic cultivation advice. Self-cultivation is and always has been central to Ruism and, indeed, to Chinese culture in general. This paper is my analysis of the earliest texts relevant to this enduring problem.

9. “Techniques for maintaining the power of the ruler in Chapter 20 of the Chunqiu fanlu,” Ivana Buljan (University of Zagreb)
This presentation deals with ideas on rulership as outlined in the “Bao wei quan” (On maintaining position and power) chapter of the Chunqiu fanlu, a compendium of Chinese philosophy and statecraft traditionally ascribed to Dong Zhongshu (c. 179 –104 BCE). “Bao wei quan” is the twentieth chapter of the text. It was written for a ruler or a candidate for rulership as guidance intended to protect his interests. This presentation discusses the main concepts and ideas of statecraft theory as presented in “Bao wei quan.” It will focus on its treatment, analysis, and techniques regarding the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, and the methods by which the latter can be controlled. As will be shown, “Bao wei quan” emphasizes the concepts of rewards/punishment (shang/fa), positional advantage (shi), non-active rulership (wu wei), human nature, achievement and reputation (gong/ming), moral and political power (de/quan) and natural administration. In addition, it will discuss how and to what degree the “Bao wei quan” synthesized these concepts into its own unique vision of rulership and statecraft. This process of reformulation demonstrates how originally non-Confucian ideas transformed the development of Chinese Confucianism and had a profound impact on the subsequent development of Chinese political thought in general.

This paper considers the relationship between women and ritual propriety in the early Spring and Autumn period. It discusses the stories of Wen Jiang of Lu and Zhong Jiang of Rui and examines their reception in terms of contemporary ritual practices. This paper argues that, contrary to the opinion expressed in
Zuozhuan that the records of Wen Jiang in Chunqiu are criticisms of her lack of womanly virtues, comparison and careful analysis shows that Chunqiu acknowledges her important role in the state. The discoveries in the tombs of the royal family of Rui in the Liangdaiqun ruins show that Zhong Jiang of Rui had real authority in the state, confirming the records about her in Zuozhuan, and that she received a final ritual status no lower than her son, the Duke of Rui, as evidenced in the buried ritual utensils from their tombs. These two cases show that in the early Spring and Autumn period the evaluation of women’s ritual status must take into account their political authority and contributions rather than simply rely on their womanly virtues and dependence on important men.

This paper will review the evidence for women’s status in the law of the Qin and Han dynasties in the light of recent archaeological excavations and newly retrieved looted materials, primarily from Hunan Province. Specifically, it will consider the evidence relating to four aspects: the legal protection of women under the law, including their treatment by the law when they were subject to assault and robbery, either by their family members, such as husbands, or by unrelated individuals; their rank in relation to that of their husbands; their ability to be heads of households; and their rights to inherit, own and dispose of property. The evidence will be drawn from the newly published Qin documents extracted from Well no. 1, Liye; the early Eastern Han cases removed from Well no. 1, Wuyi guangchang, Changsha; and the legal documents held by the Yuelu Academy, Hunan University, among other sources.

12. “‘Cutting Off the Enemy’s Supply Lines’ As a Strategy in Early Chinese Warfare,” Tse Wai Kit (Wicky) (Hong Kong Polytechnic University)
With the escalating scale and increasing complexity of battles and campaigns, success in early Chinese warfare could not depend solely on the ability to put the biggest or best armed forces into the field. If logistics failed, the path to victory was very likely blocked. Storing and providing sufficient supplies, and securing a safe line to deliver needed resources, guaranteed the military capability of one’s forces. Meanwhile, capturing the enemy’s supply depots and destroying their logistics would help one attain victory – sometimes even without hard fighting, which ancient Chinese military thinkers held to be an ideal way of achieving victory. This paper aims to explain how and why “cutting off the enemy’s supply line,” as an indirect approach gradually became an efficient and widely adopted strategy in Chinese warfare during the Warring States Period to the early Former Han Dynasty. Through examinations of military treatises and historical records of exemplary battles and campaigns, this paper also discusses the development of the theory of military logistics and the practice of cutting off supply lines at the operational level.