



EARLY CHINA SEMINAR LECTURE SERIES

Communities and settlement in hunter-gatherer societies in Northeast China

Pauline Sebillaud · French National Centre for Scientific Research



This research explores settlement patterns, subsistence strategies, and community structure in prehistorical Northeast China societies. It is mainly based on the new data from the Houtaomuga site, located in the northwest of Jilin Province. This site was occupied between the 11th millennium BC and the 13th c. AD. The excavation data from Houtaomuga reveal the changes in settlement patterns and subsistence modes over 13 millennia. The first human occupation – an 11th to 10th millennium BC seasonal camp dedicated to the collection of shells, place of discovery of the earliest ceramics in Northern China, was replaced during the 6th millennium BC by a dense occupation, which developed into a large village during the end of the 5th millennium BC. After being abandoned for two millennia, the site became a cemetery during the 1st millennium BC. Abandoned again for nearly 1,000 years, it was occupied for the last time between the 10th and 13th centuries AD. In this central region of Northeast Asia, where subsistence strategies mainly involved fishing and collecting, the archaeological records reveal a succession of settlement patterns and economy modes, which allows us to look for the elements structuring the communities, searching for the social ties in these new data on architecture, craftsmanship, funeral practices, and human adaptation.

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Seminar Co-Chairs:

Jue Guo, Barnard College, Columbia University
Glenda Chao, Ursinus College

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