



EARLY CHINA SEMINAR
LECTURE SERIES

**The Anthropocene Is A Process Not An Event:
China from the Late Neolithic to the Song Dynasty**

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Increasingly, the Anthropocene is defined as a geological event, or “golden spike” that begins in the later twentieth century with the detonation of nuclear weapons. While this event-based definition serves a useful purpose in providing a formal geological definition, it tells us nothing of how humans developed the social, economic, technological, and moral capacities that allow us to affect natural processes at a global scale. Using archaeological and environmental data from China between the late Neolithic (ca. 5000 years ago) and the Song Dynasty (ca. 1000 years ago) I explore how we can conceive of the Anthropocene as a process that developed slowly over time and that was conditioned by changing human interactions with the environment that were an outgrowth of shifting social, political and even religious practices and behaviors. This approach to the Anthropocene concept highlights rather than defines a major set of transformations in human relations with the sources of power, wealth and production.

October 14th, 2016 (Friday) 4:30-6:30pm

**403 Kent Hall, 1140 Amsterdam Avenue
Columbia University**

Seminar Co-Chairs: Jue Guo, Barnard College, Columbia University; Roderick Campbell, Institute for the Study of Ancient World, New York University

Co-sponsored by The Tang Center for Early China, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, and The Columbia University Seminars, Columbia University.