



EARLY CHINA SEMINAR
LECTURE SERIES

The Inner Asian Frontier Re-examined: Shaping the Study of Artifacts and Mental Boundaries

Yan Sun • Gettysburg College



This presentation examines the role of artifacts in the Inner Asian Frontier (ca. 3000- ca.700 BCE) traditionally known as the Northern Zone or *beifang*. Two overarching concepts are used to guide this study. First, the region should be examined through a multi-centered view, which values the various choices made by individuals and groups at different localities under different socio-political circumstances; second, the region like other frontiers in the ancient world should be considered as a dynamic and contact zone where peoples of different interests, ethnic and cultural backgrounds met, competed and negotiated for their identities and standings. Through the study of archaeological and inscriptional data, this research proposes that the Inner Asian Frontier was a place where allegiances shifted constantly and where self-identified units were generated, established and collapsed. The diversity and complexity of the identity construction in the Inner Asian Frontier will be defined as technoscape, lineagescape, regionscape, and individualscape.

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951 Schermerhorn Extension, 1200 Amsterdam Ave, Columbia University

Seminar Co-Chairs:

Jue Guo, Barnard College, Columbia University

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