



EARLY CHINA SEMINAR
LECTURE SERIES

Hepu and the Maritime Silk Road

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Located on the northern shore of the Beibu Gulf in southern China, the site of Hepu is enjoying a surge of interest among those who study the history of the so-called Maritime Silk Road. Matching early texts which mention Hepu as a Han period port from which merchants traveled to regions as far as India, burials dating from the 1st century BCE to the 2nd century CE at Hepu have yielded clear evidence of long-distance maritime contacts, including tens of thousands of glass and stone beads originating in southeast and south Asia. This talk reviews the current evidence for such contacts and addresses several issues given limited attention by archaeologists: the late participation of Hepu in pre-existing networks of exchange operating in the South China Sea; changes over time in the types and quantities of trade goods reaching Hepu; the socio-political dimensions of access to exotic goods at

Hepu; and the extension of maritime trading networks to other population centers in southeast China.



November 10, 2023, 4:30–6:30 pm

Faculty House, 64 Morningside Drive, Columbia University

*Please check the announcement board in the first-floor lobby for room information

Seminar Co-Chairs:

Glenda Chao, Ursinus College

Ethan Harkness, New York University