

Introduction: K.C. Chang and Chinese Archaeology Today

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This Special Issue of *The Review of Archaeology* is dedicated to the memory of our teacher, colleague, and dear friend, Professor Kwang-chih Chang—or K.C., as we all knew him—who passed away one year ago, in January 2001. K.C. was a long-standing Contributing Editor to *The Review of Archaeology*, and he particularly cherished this role in part because (along with his own books and journal articles, and the university teaching that he loved so much) it provided yet another avenue by which he could provide a window into Chinese archaeology for Western readers. We were delighted when Frederick West asked us to put together this issue as a way of celebrating K.C.'s life and his many great and diverse contributions to the study of ancient China and the field of archaeology in general. Yet deciding on an appropriate way to do this was no easy task. In the end, we decided that we would not have authors summarize K.C.'s academic achievements, nor would we turn to senior scholars—K.C.'s own generation of colleagues—for contributions, since these were already available elsewhere.¹ Instead, we decided to seek scholarly contributions that might best show how K.C.'s enormously influential body of schol-

¹ For a comprehensive review of Kwang-chih Chang's life and career, see the long obituary written by K.C.'s student Lothar von Falkenhausen, "Kwang-chih Chang (1931-2001)" *Artibus Asiae* 61.1 (2001), pp. 120-138. A rather complete bibliography of K.C.'s published scholarship can be found in the *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* (Leiden, The Netherlands), Vol. 1, No. 1-4 (1999), and Vol. 3, No. 1-2 (forthcoming). These volumes comprise two parts of the journal's three-part Festschrift in honor of K.C. Chang (the third part being Volume 2, No. 1-2 [2000]): together, the Festschrift contains forty essays written by many of his former students and colleagues. A collection of memorial essays can be found in "Jinian Zhang Guangzhi yuanshi zhuanji (Special section: In Memoriam—A Tribute to Professor Chang Kwang-chih), in *Gujin lunheng (Disquisitions on the Past and Present)*, No. 6 (June 2001): 106-141, published by the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei. A larger number of memorial essays and remembrances will be published by Sanlian Press (Beijing) in the forthcoming volume, *Si bai wei jia: Zhuinian kaoxuejia Zhang Guangzhi xiansheng (Finding a home anywhere: Remembering Professor Kwang-chih Chang, archaeologist)*. Four essays from this volume (those by Xu Pingfang, Yu Yingshi, Xu Zhuoyun, and Wu Hong) were recently published under the title "Zhuinian Zhang Guangzhi xiansheng (A remembrance of Prof. Kwang-chih Chang)," in *Dushu* 2002.2: 59-83. Recent interviews with K.C. provide additional insight into his scholarly development, complementing his own publications. Most notable among these are the interview by Helkie Ferrie, "A conversation with K.C. Chang," in *Current Anthropology* 36 (1995): 307-325.

arship has shaped the current direction of Chinese archaeology and the continuing impact it should have on the promising future of the field.

In order to do this, we have specifically asked members of a new generation of rising, young scholars to discuss their own work in areas of research that were near and dear to K.C.'s heart. Thus, common threads can be found running through the papers presented here: settlement pattern studies, the origins of social complexity, the complementary relationship between historical texts and archaeological data, Shang archaeology, interregional interaction, and the importance of the application of multidisciplinary research and an anthropological approach in archaeological studies in China. As the reader also will see, all of the papers in this issue have been touched by K.C.'s ideas, sometimes subtly and sometimes directly. The contributors include some of K.C.'s former students from Harvard (Murowchick, Liu, and Cohen); Chinese scholars who studied with K.C. as visiting scholars at Harvard and/or worked with him on his collaborative project at Shangqiu, "Investigations into Early Shang Civilization" (Chen and Tang); and scholars who were not K.C.'s students directly but nonetheless whose archaeological studies have been profoundly shaped by him: these include Shelach, who is engaged in another Sino-foreign collaborative field program, and Song and Zhang, from Peking University, with whose archaeology program K.C. had a long and very special affinity over the past three decades. That K.C.'s influence shows in all of these papers is not because the authors have chosen to particularly emphasize his impact on their work, but rather, it is because K.C.'s scholarship has truly resonated throughout the field.

Chinese archaeology is now going through dramatic changes that are in no small part the result of the field opening to the outside world, and K.C. has been key in many of these profound changes. While China was relatively closed to foreigners in the 1960s and early 1970s, K.C. provided a steady stream of scholarship—perhaps most importantly his survey volume, *The Archaeology of Ancient China* (originally published in 1963, with revised and updated editions appearing in 1968, 1977, and 1986a) that brought Chinese archaeology to the attention of scholars and students in the West. K.C. was a member of the ground-breaking Palaeoanthropological Delegation that visited China in 1975, opening the doors for direct communication between Chinese and American colleagues, and laying the foundation for what would become a steady flow of such international exchanges and conferences during the 1980s, for which K.C. was a tireless advocate and organizer.

K.C.'s archaeological genealogy underscores his key role as a bridge between the traditional archaeology of China and new trends of anthropological archaeology in the West. While a student in the newly established

Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, at National Taiwan University in Taipei in the early 1950s, his main teachers were Li Ji (Li Chi), Dong Zuobin (Tung Tso-pin), Gao Quxun (Kao Ch'ü-hsün), and Shi Zhangru (Shih Chang-ju)—the principal researchers at the seminal 1928-1937 excavations at the late Shang site at Yinxi, near Anyang—and the eminent ethnographer Ling Shunsheng. When K.C. went to Harvard and pursued the doctorate in anthropology—like his mentor Li Chi before him—his thesis advisors were Hallam Movius, Lauriston Ward, and Gordon Willey. While Movius' influence is seen in Chang's early interest in East Asian Palaeolithic archaeology, it was Willey's focus on settlement archaeology that had an early and profound effect on Chang, who applied this approach to the Chinese archaeological data in his dissertation, *Prehistoric Settlements in China: A Study in Archaeological Method and Theory* (1960), and in much of his later work. It is with particular sadness that this present tribute to K.C. coincides with the death this past week of Gordon Willey. Willey and Chang epitomized that special relationship between teacher and student, and both extended that relationship to subsequent generations of students who fondly studied under their tutelage. In addition to their mastery of the archaeological materials of their areas of study, both were also true *junzi*, "gentlemen scholars" in the finest sense of that phrase, and the long halls of the Peabody Museum are much the lonelier with their passing.

Before briefly introducing the papers in this issue, we need to discuss the general orientation of Chinese archaeology and a few recent trends. The founding and development of archaeological science in China is intimately related to the process of demonstrating the veracity of places, peoples, politics, and events known through China's rich historical record. Archaeology in China today still remains chiefly an historical practice, and it finds its roots, structure, role, and direction in China's 2500 year-old historiographic tradition (see Chang 1981, Falkenhausen 1993). Although Chinese archaeology from the 1950s through 1970s was undertaken within the Marxist paradigm (see Tong 1995, Olsen 1987), while Marxist social evolution provided a ready-made interpretive framework, the bulk of archaeological writings remained typological, culture-historical, and directed toward answering traditional historical questions. Archaeology since the 1980s has paid much less attention to the Marxist framework, but the culture-historical approach and historiographic orientation remain firmly entrenched.

However, two complementary developments over the last 15 years are fundamentally changing the nature of Chinese archaeology. The first new development is the advent of a regional approach to archaeology: new, fantastic discoveries in what were once considered

peripheral regions have expanded our understanding of ancient cultures well beyond the North China Plain, which had been the principal focus of research since the 1920s. While this in itself is a positive development, there are also negative aspects involved. Political changes and new economic policies within China over the last decade have reduced national funding of archaeological research, and this has impacted what types of research can be carried out and what sites are deemed worthy of excavation. Budget cuts have resulted in a focus on salvage work to raise funds and fewer academically-oriented projects, while new demands for institutional self-sufficiency are at the same time resulting in a growth in what could be called a nationally-oriented localism, meaning that archaeologists at the local levels are now forced to find sites for excavation in their own jurisdictions that will garner the greatest attention (especially in terms of national-level funding and tourism *yuan*) and that interpretation is being directed toward what Falkenhausen (1995) has aptly termed regional supremacism within a nationalist framework.

The second recent development is the introduction of interdisciplinary programs into archaeological research. This stems directly from the opening of Chinese archaeology to the outside world, and with it has come the beginnings of a push toward research that extends beyond the traditional focus of excavating to corroborate text-based histories or Marxist social evolutionary models. Although some Chinese scholars started to travel abroad for training in the early 1980s, the introduction of multidisciplinary research programs was greatly energized by the passage of new antiquities legislation in the early 1990s that allowed for the first time since before World War II truly collaborative Sino-foreign archaeological field projects to be undertaken. A number of such projects have either been completed or are well underway (Murowchick 1997), and much of the discussions in the papers in this issue stem from these pioneering projects.

International collaboration, combined with the growing numbers of Chinese archaeologists studying at Western and Japanese universities, and of outside scholars visiting and lecturing in China, have fostered an exciting new atmosphere within which Chinese archaeology is thriving academically, if not economically. Archaeologists are beginning to ask new types of research questions, and new methodologies are being adopted in order to gather the types of data now needed to answer these new questions. Over the last decade the field has witnessed dramatic research results suddenly being brought forth through the introduction of methodologies and techniques long-established in the West, such as flotation, geological analysis of site formation processes, and systematic regional survey. The Chinese database has also now reached a point where

archaeologists should be able to critically re-evaluate theoretical models originally developed in other areas of the Old and New Worlds using the Chinese case: these would include models of the emergence of agriculture, the development of complex society, and the emergence and role of writing systems, to name but a few. In many instances, the Chinese data would probably highlight the need for the reworking of many models derived from these other regions or for the development of new explanatory models. This brings us back to a point frequently made by K.C.: the Chinese case must not be overlooked in the formulation and testing of theory (e.g. Chang 1989).

The five papers presented here in this special issue of *The Review of Archaeology* by no means can cover the broad scope of Chinese archaeological research, and in fact, focus for the most part on the Bronze Age (ca. 2000-500 BC). The reader not familiar with archaeology in China may be surprised to hear that these papers are representative of what is, for Chinese archaeology, research on the cutting edge. That the research orientation in all of the papers remains historical, and even culture-historical, albeit with considerations of socio-political evolution drawn from Anglo-American anthropological archaeology, should also stand out, but one must give consideration to Chinese archaeology's basis and structure deriving directly from 2500-year-old historiographic and antiquarian traditions. These traditions are particularly deeply entrenched in Bronze Age studies, as this is the period in China for which inscriptions and reliable historical texts become available.

However, if the research presented in these papers were to be contrasted with the broader body of archaeological research in China, then the new departures these papers actually contain would immediately stand out. We see new forms of data collected through systematic regional survey and the interpretation of this data based in anthropological models (Liu and Chen; Shelach); we see methodologies drawn from outside of the typically rigid disciplinary boundaries of Chinese archaeology, including geoarchaeology and geophysics, being used to gain new insights into long-standing debates centered in the historical traditions (Tang; Murowchick and Cohen); and we see archaeological research being applied in studies of environmental change (Song and Zhang).

In their paper, Liu and Chen review the history of settlement archaeology in the West and trace its adoption in China following K.C. Chang's lecture on this topic as part of a series of archaeological presentations he made at Peking University in 1984. With their subsequent publication (Chang 1986b) these lectures garnered widespread attention, especially among younger Chi-

nese archaeologists who were anxious to apply new approaches to their discipline, and settlement archaeology gradually gained a foothold both in Chinese and international field projects. Liu and Chen provide an overview of five international survey projects currently underway in China, including their own project in the Yiluo Basin in western Henan province. Whereas Chinese archaeological survey traditionally was geared primarily towards locating individual major sites for excavation, these international projects instead are designed around research questions concerning socio-political evolution and employ multidisciplinary methodologies and more rigorous sampling methods in their surveying.

In Shelach's paper, the reader will see the problems now faced by archaeologists in China trying to model interregional interaction and social change. He laments the lack of suitable Chinese data for use in, and developing, anthropological models. This is actually a common refrain now found among all of these international collaborative projects, and it is just another sign of the newness of the methodologies they employ in China. In time, the struggles archaeologists are encountering today will result in a flourish of new theoretical models and research methodologies applied to support them. Shelach's project takes place in the Chifeng region of northeast China, an area long ignored by an archaeological tradition that focused on the North China Plain.

Tang's paper reviews what has been the major focus of attention since the advent of archaeology in China in the 1920s, the archaeological chronology of the Shang dynasty and its correlation with the textual record. Studies in Shang archaeology have been bolstered in recent years by a series of new discoveries of Shang urban sites, including the Shang cities at Yanshi, Xiaoshuangqiao, Huanbei, and others. These sites provide new candidates in the continuing effort to match archaeological sites with the sequence of Shang capital cities named in the historical texts, and Tang's paper highlights how these interpretations need to be continuously revised in order to accommodate these new finds. His discussion draws from results of the recent Xia-Shang-Zhou Chronology Project, a multi-million dollar research program funded over the past five years by the central government. The explicit goal of this project was to use archaeological, textual, inscriptional, and astronomical data to try to establish an absolute chronology for key historical events in this early dynastic period in the North China Plain.

K.C. Chang's lifelong focus on Shang civilization culminated in his collaborative field project, "Investigations into Early Shang Civilization." Although given the choice of working almost anywhere in China, K.C. decided to pursue what he had long considered to be one of the key questions in Chinese archaeology: the origins of Shang and the location of the predynastic rit-

ual and political center, Great City Shang. The place he chose to do this was the area of deep Yellow River alluvial deposits in the eastern end of Henan province. As reviewed by Murowchick and Cohen, the Shangqiu Project illustrates the merging of traditional text-based archaeological approaches with the application of a new array of survey and analytical methods from diverse disciplines in the natural and physical sciences.

That multidisciplinary archaeological data can be used to examine environmental issues in China is a new realization that can be found in the essay by Song and Zhang. Desertification is a very real and troubling issue facing modern China, with more than one-fourth of the nation currently covered by deserts that are rapidly expanding into key agricultural regions. Song and Zhang look at one such area in northeast China to identify patterns over five thousand years in order to assess the impact of human activities on the process of desertification. The paper is exciting not only for the evidence it provides to understand this relationship, but also because it represents what must be one of the first instances of the archaeological record being used in order to guide the formulation of modern social and economic policy, in this case to counter the effects of desertification today.

We hope that the papers herein will interest archaeologists working in other parts of the world. While on the one hand, the introduction of modern methodologies in archaeological survey and analysis is causing rapid changes in Chinese archaeology, the discipline continues to rely heavily on its rich and long tradition of historical scholarship. Taken together, Chinese archaeology in the

21st century promises both to shed new light on the cultural developments of ancient East Asia and to bring new approaches and hypotheses to the table of world archaeology. This was K.C. Chang's long-held wish. □

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