

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This is the second issue of *Early China* published with Cambridge Journals. Shortly before this move from the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, to Cambridge University Press, *Early China* became available on JSTOR (with a moving wall of five years). Now, with Cambridge Journals, the current issues of the journal are available online, and back issues are free to subscribers. This gives *Early China* a global reach and a much higher visibility than ever before. Moreover, we have instituted an annual Society for the Study of Early China conference, convened on the day preceding the Association for Asian Studies Conference (see <http://earlychina.org/conference.html>). However, if the journal and the Society are to continue to thrive and grow with our fast-developing field, we need to increase our member subscriptions (donations would also be welcome, of course). This is now easy—just go to: www.journals.cambridge.org/SSEC to subscribe online, by telephone, or with a mailed-in form.

As previously, subscribers to the journal are automatically members of the Society for the Study of Early China. However, there is a conceptual change related to online access: subscriptions are now annual; that is, your subscription is for the *year* in which you subscribe and includes online access on a “first view” basis as the articles become available throughout the year, as well as receipt of the printed volume for that year. *Early China* 37 (2014) was printed in late December of 2014 and sent out in early 2015. This caused some confusion among subscribers, but beginning with this issue of *Early China* (38), we expect to be on a regular schedule, with the journal printed annually each autumn of the designated year.

This issue includes two commemorative articles, honoring scholars in our field, Magdalene von Dewall (1927–2014) and David S. Nivison (1923–2014). Magdalene von Dewall was a German scholar of East and Southeast Asian archaeology, best known for her seminal work on chariots and Dian culture. As Lothar von Falkenhausen’s portrait makes clear, her academic career was hampered both by her gender and by the lack of recognition in Germany (and elsewhere) of anthropologically oriented research on Chinese archaeology. Unfortunately, although there has been progress on both fronts in recent years, it has been frustratingly slow: there are still relatively few women in early China studies with appointments in major universities in Europe and

the U.S., and few positions in archaeology programs for specialists in East Asian archaeology.

David Nivison taught in the Philosophy Department at Stanford University and his work on early Chinese philosophy is discussed in Kwong-loi Shun's article herein. Beginning in the 1980s, he also wrote on Chinese paleography and historical chronology and he served on the editorial board of *Early China*. He made two arguments that have been very influential. One, first presented at an International Conference on Shang Civilization in 1982, was published in 1986 in a Supplement to *Early China*, under the title, "The Question Question." In this paper, he argued that Shang divination inscriptions should not be read as questions, but as statements in accordance with their grammar. After a forum on this topic in *Early China* 14 (1989), many Chinese, as well as Western, scholars began to accept this argument, at least to the extent of dropping the question marks at the end of transcriptions. His other argument, which remains controversial, was that the "current" *Bamboo Annals* is an authentic text that can be used to establish the precise chronology of the early dynasties if one recognizes that its dates are systematically distorted by a two-year mourning period before the adoption of the king's official calendar. This argument first made by him in 1983 (*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43 and *Early China* 8) was later extensively developed by him and by his student, Edward L. Shaughnessy.

Though Magdalene von Dewall and David S. Nivison were very different as people and in their scholarly interests, they shared a dedication to the study of early China and they did much to advance the field. They will be sorely missed.

Sarah Allan
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