

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS*

Andreeva, Petya. Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 2018.
Fantastic Beasts Of The Eurasian Steppes: Toward A Revisionist Approach To Animal-Style Art. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 10838786).

Animal style is a centuries-old approach to decoration characteristic of the various cultures which flourished along the Eurasian steppe belt in the latter half of the first millennium B.C.E. This vast territory stretching from the Mongolian Plateau to the Hungarian Plain, has yielded hundreds of archaeological finds associated with the early Iron Age. Among these discoveries, high-end metalwork, textiles and tomb furniture intricately embellished with idiosyncratic zoomorphic motifs, stand out as recurrent elements. While scholarship has labeled animal-style imagery as scenes of combat and predation, this dissertation argues against this overly simplified classification model, which ignores the variety of visual tools employed in the abstraction of fantastic hybrids. I identify five primary categories in the arrangement and portrayal of zoomorphic designs: these traits, frequently occurring in clusters, constitute the first comprehensive definition of animal-style art. Each chapter focuses on the materiality and strategic placement of a different type of animal-style object: headdresses, torques, and plaques often embellish the body of the deceased whereas felt, leather and silk textiles used as ceiling hangings, rugs, and coffin covers serve to define the tomb's spatial parameters. Lastly, the dissertation delves into the continuous retention of animal-style motifs in the arts of the Eurasian steppes after the dawn of the first millennium C.E. thus challenging the narrative that animal art disappeared after the Iron Age. I demonstrate that elite members of the various pastoral societies perched along the peripheries of sedentary empires invented local interpretations of a common visual language made of tropes and devices (such as "visual synecdoche" and "frame narrative") resulting from ingenious interpretations of the above-mentioned five categories. In so doing, they aimed to tackle a shared conceptual problem: the attendance of a real audience of a certain social stature during the funerary ceremony and the presence of an imagined (divine) one in the afterlife. The dissertation thus deconstructs the politically motivated role of animal-style items in elite

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burials and argues that animal art was a constructed visual language intelligible to a small nucleus of elites whose sociopolitical status and network of influence were in fact inextricably linked to their level of fluency in it.

Du, Heng. Ph.D. Harvard University, 2018.

The Author's Two Bodies: Paratext in Early Chinese Textual Culture.

This dissertation tackles the questions of what constitutes a text and what constitutes an author in Early China (before 220 C.E.) by proposing a new set of methodologies based on a close examination of both unearthed and transmitted sources. Recent manuscript discoveries have upended existing historical narratives of this period, including the system of canonical books and authors—such as the *Analects* of Confucius—that had once structured the pre-imperial corpus. As a result, the study of Early China is now confronted with a set of challenging and fundamental questions, such as how to determine textual boundaries within excavated manuscripts, or whether compilations like the *Analects* can be read as single unified texts. To address these questions, this dissertation expands Gérard Genette's concept of "paratext"—the materials surrounding the main text such as titles, book covers, author names, and prefaces—so that it can serve as an analytical tool. Rather than as descriptions of historical reality, Genette approaches paratexts as prescriptions furnished by textual producers outlining how a text should be understood. This project goes beyond Genette in arguing for paratexts' additional function of prescribing the very boundary of the text itself. This argument, in turn, contributes to the historiography of the rise of authorship in Early China. By treating the representation of author figures as paratextual elements, it demonstrates how the portrayal of the putative author, just like that of "genuine" authors, was instrumental in delimiting a text or a corpus.

Based on a matrix of criteria, this dissertation locates hitherto unrecognized forms of paratexts in Chinese sources that straddle the transition into the imperial period, such as the reiterations of *ziyue* 子曰 (the Master said), branching catalogues, and author anecdotes. Overall, this interpretative approach bypasses the irreconcilable debates over authenticity. It further rehabilitates early author portrayals, often regarded as "apocryphal" in existing scholarship, as palimpsests of competing paratexts.

To date, paratext has been most closely associated with the study of print culture, and it is yet to be employed as an analytical tool for dealing with the questions of authorship and textual identity in pre-print media. This new approach, incorporating book history scholarship as

well as studies of other manuscript cultures from fields such as biblical studies and classics, allows for a revision of the history of text and media in general. Existing scholarship on textual transmission tends to attribute the varying degree of textual fluidity to differences in technology (such as oral versus written and manuscript versus print) or to cultural and historical context (such as China versus Europe and medieval versus modern). In lieu of a deterministic technological analysis, this dissertation shows that textual producers throughout history have wrestled with the vagaries of textual flux by deploying paratextual tools, underscoring their intent and agency.

Elias, Hajni. Ph.D. University of Cambridge, 2018.

The Southwest: A Study of Regional Identity in Material Culture and Textual Sources during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220 C.E.).

This dissertation examines social and cultural memory and identity manifested in the art of the southwest, present-day Sichuan province, during the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 C.E.). It explores how the southwest's geographical landscape, multi-cultural inhabitants and economic and social conditions facilitated the development of a distinct regional consciousness and identity. Through the examination of material culture combined with analysis of early textual sources the dissertation highlights important findings associated with the southwest's social make-up, economic activities, burial practices, education, and governance. The main sources of material culture studied are pictorial brick tiles and stone reliefs discovered in stone and brick chamber tombs; decorated stone sarcophagi placed in the region's cliff tombs; and commemorative and ancestral stelae. In its methodology, the dissertation employs Western theories on social and cultural memory and identity. It also bridges two fields of study, cultural and art history. The dissertation's findings aim to contribute to our knowledge of the southwest and to the study of regional identity in early imperial China.

Chapter One examines two important economic activities, the production of salt and alcohol as reflected in the material culture of the southwest. It highlights the role the indigenous population played in the manufacture of salt and how women contributed with their work of alcohol production to their household and to the region's economy. The chapter also shows how elements of nature found in the southwest's tomb art provide an insight into the importance of the region's landscape and its significance to local society that was affected by its environment on a daily basis.

Chapter Two surveys decorated stone sarcophagi that are found in large numbers in the region's cliff tombs. To date tens of thousands of

cliff tombs have been discovered in Sichuan, confirming their importance to local funerary customs during the Eastern Han period. The chapter examines the iconography of stone sarcophagi in its cliff tomb setting and suggests that there was a change in the decorative scheme employed, a distinct shift in burial custom and a modification in cemetery layout to suit new funerary practices. The chapter also highlights the sudden rise of cliff tomb burial in the southwest and its decline by the 3rd century C.E. suggesting that it was a trend that followed a particular call in a specific period.

Chapter Three is a study of the recordings of public and private memories inscribed on stelae discovered in the southwest. It provides full translations, annotations and analysis of three stelae erected to commemorate Governors Li 李, Pei 裴 and Fan Min 樊敏, referred to by their titles Lijun bei 李君碑 (Stele of Governor Li), dated to 133 C.E. (re-erected in 146 C.E.), Peijun bei 裴君碑 (Stele of Governor Pei), dated to 144 C.E. (re-erected in 152 C.E.) and Fan Min bei 樊敏碑 (Stele of Fan Min), dated to 205 C.E. respectively. The stelae examined highlight issues in relation to the region's topography, politics, education, and culture. They also provide a local perspective on the relations between the Han government and local society. Approaching stelae as carriers of memories, the dissertation aims to help advance the general study of stelae as valuable source material for scholars in the field of early China, a period when few texts of local or regional provenance or perspective are available.

Hegesh, Noa. Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 2018.

In Tune With The Cosmos: Tuning Theory, Cosmology, And Concepts Of Sound In Early China. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 10845002).

This dissertation explores tuning theories, concepts of sound, and their relation to cosmology in China between the mid-third century B.C.E. and the first century C.E. My overall argument is twofold: First, I argue that to truly understand musical thought in early China, we must realize that it was perceived as a technology. Sound and tuning, especially in a cosmological context, were often discussed in mathematical terms. Second, I argue that for the same reason, we must understand how this technology functioned not only in relation to musical performance per se, but also in what we consider today as non-musical settings, such as mathematical astronomy, the standardization of weights and measures, and divination techniques. Early Chinese authors thought about sound as resonating *qi* emanating from the cosmos. Its calculation, manipulation, categorization, and measuring were central to the synchronization between the human and cosmic realms.

Part one of the dissertation discusses the gradual introduction of cosmological ideas into existing musical systems around the mid-third century B.C.E. As a result, some texts began discussing sound in numerical terms, as part of theories that aimed to measure the regularities of cosmic processes. Part two explores developments in acoustics and the concept of cosmological sound, through an analysis of a case study from the Western Han: Jing Fang 京房 and his tuning theory, which divided the octave into sixty tuning standards. I also provide an annotated translation of the first section of the “Treatises on Tuning Standards and Mathematical Astronomy” (“*Lǜlì zhī*” 律歷志) in *The History of the Later Han*. Part Three explores the concept of imperial control in Wang Mang’s brief Xin dynasty, examining the connections between sound, metrological practices, and the ideologies and philosophies that provided cosmological meaning to metrological choices. I argue that despite the court’s rhetoric of universal standardization, anchored in the dimensions of the Huangzhong pitch pipe, in reality these acts of standardization may not have succeeded far beyond the court’s immediate sphere of influence.

Lee, Hsiu-Ping. Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles, 2018.
Erlitou and Its Neighbors: Contextualizing Interregional Interaction in the Central Yellow River Region in Ancient China. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 13423056).

The primary goal of this dissertation is to explore various possible interaction patterns between Erlitou and its neighboring regions through the approach of contextualization. Under the presupposition that Erlitou was the political center of ancient China, the interregional interaction between Erlitou and its neighboring regions were always interpreted as a “center–periphery” relationship. Instead of Erlitou-centered perspective, this dissertation attempts to adopt the approach of contextualization, investigating how the three main core areas in ancient China, namely the Henan Region in which Erlitou was located, as well as the Hedong Region and the Henei Region which were two major neighboring regions of Erlitou, interacted with each other during the second quarter of the second millennium B.C.E. In the past, scholars put more emphasis on how the center influenced its peripheries. However, this dissertation will also investigate how the peripheries influenced the center and how peripheries interacted with each other. The approach of contextualizing exotic artifacts within local settings provides crucial insights, helping us to reexamine the interaction patterns between the Henan, Hedong, and Henei Regions. The research results reveal a highly complicated interaction network between these three regions during the Erlitou Period. First of all, the relationship between the Henan Region and the Henei Region

was getting tense over time due to military conflicts. Besides, the Henei Region revealed a greater influence on the Henan Region. Second, the relationship between the Henan Region and the Hedong Region may have been marked by competition over the metal resources for casting bronze objects. However, the Henan Region seems to have displayed a greater influence on the Hedong Region. Finally, the relationship between the Hedong Region and the Henei Region seems to have been steady. Probably these two regions maintained a situation of peaceful coexistence for a long time in the Erlitou Period.

Shi, Tao. Ph.D. University of California, Los Angeles, 2018.
Mining, Trade and State Formation in Early China. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 10936546).

This dissertation aims at exploring the trade strategy and center-periphery relations in the process of state formation in early China. The focus is the Longshan and Erlitou periods (c. 2300–1520 B.C.E.). Instead of a center-based perspective, this research focuses on peripheries, and discusses the impact of peripheral societies on the formation of the political-economic landscape of early states. By taking resource extraction and distribution as a departure point, I discuss the production modes, economic forms, and social contexts in three resource-rich regions, which were significant sources of key resources in early China. Based on my estimation on scales of mining and mining landscapes, I argue that turquoise and copper mining and mining-related productions were all local, small-scale and village-based activities during the two periods. The current evidence shows that early states did not place direct control over resource extraction and distribution in these peripheral regions. Moreover, based on the arguments and comparative cases in other regions of the world, I further argue that the strategy of resource procurement of early states was never monopolistic. Rather, the Longshan and Erlitou-period states adopted a decentralized strategy to procure key resources. By considering Erlitou as a phenomenon of regeneration after Longshan collapses, I argue that the center-periphery relations maintained a strong continuity in this transitional period.

Sturm, Camilla. Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 2017.
Structure and Evolution of Economic Networks in Neolithic Walled Towns of the Jiangnan Plain: A Geochemical Perspective. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 10692608).

This research examines the development of early complex societies in the middle Yangzi River valley of China during the late Neolithic (c. 3100–2000 B.C.E.). The most conspicuous marker of these societies is

the large and densely-populated walled settlements that emerged across the region in the late fourth millennium B.C.E. Settlement survey of a 58 km² region encompassing two such walled towns, Taojiahu and Xiaocheng, has shown that for over a thousand years, nearly all inhabitants of the region lived together in tightly nucleated communities within the walled enclosures. This distinctive settlement pattern highlights the presence of strong and persistent sociopolitical forces that drew together and integrated these communities.

This dissertation investigates the degree to which controlling, managing, or profiting from the production and distribution of basic goods contributed to the ability of aspiring leaders at Taojiahu and Xiaocheng to project their political authority. More specifically, it examines how changes in utilitarian economic networks corresponds with the centralization and decentralization of these walled towns. Geochemical analysis of 1,150 pottery sherds collected during the Taojiahu-Xiaocheng regional settlement survey were used to reconstruct the organization of ceramic exchange networks during the Qujialing (3100–2500 B.C.E.) and Shijiahe (2500–2000 B.C.E.) periods.

Results of this analysis indicate that late Neolithic pottery was made by several distinct groups of producers that were based in different areas of the study area. Ceramic vessels were circulated through open, unrestricted networks that linked together households in different neighborhoods and in different towns. The organization of these networks was surprisingly stable through time despite population growth and centralization at Xiaocheng and population decline and decentralization at Taojiahu, suggesting that economic control was not a source of political power for local elites. The longevity and robustness of economic ties between the two towns finally offers evidence that relations between the communities was based more strongly in cooperation than in conflict.

Thaithosaeng, Pattira. Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 2018.

Women During the Han Dynasty Through the Lens of Excavated Materials.

Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 10981293).

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the life of Han women on the basis of excavated materials through four themes, namely, convict-labor, motherhood, sexual partners, and the afterlife. The sources include the Shuihudi, Zhangjiashan, and Mawangdui manuscripts along with visual representations and tomb artefacts. I argue that women were always the subject of concern either by the state or their partners. Female criminals constituted a crucial part in the government's labor force. They were expected to effectively produce offspring and raise the future population with some benefits in return under the principle of filial piety. Sexual relationships between men and women were

systematically regulated by the state, while individual men focused on improving health during sexual intercourse and women received pleasure as a by-product. Only in the afterlife would the rules be more relaxed, with life as depicted inside the tomb as evidence. Excavated materials have produced a more nuanced image of Han women, as they offer new insights to our understanding of gender and sexuality during the early periods, for which we previously lacked the resources to study.

Valenti, Federico. Ph.D. University of Sassari, 2018.

Biological Classification in Early Chinese Dictionaries and Glossaries: from Fish to Invertebrates and Vice Versa.

This dissertation problematizes the classification of chong 蟲 (invertebrates) and yu 魚 (fish) in Early Chinese texts. The loci classici analyzed will range from the Warring States (c. 453–221 B.C.E.) to the Eastern Han period (dong Han 東漢, 25–220 C.E.). The focus is on the lexical ambiguity between these two zoological categories: despite being perceived as different, they include a more or less loose set of “dynamic” words that shift from one category to the other.

The project concentrates on two early Chinese texts: the *Erya* 爾雅 (3rd century B.C.E.) and the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (100 C.E.). These works had a pivotal role during the development of Chinese lexicography and gave the lexical basis of later texts. They are also the first texts that deal with the problem of taxonomical classification in Early China.

By systematically applying a philological approach to a selection of zoological glosses preserved in these sources, this study aims at reformulating the way in which early Chinese “proto-zoological categories” are organized. Through the analysis of selected case studies, it aims at showing that even if there are fairly well attested categories that constitute a dichotomous system (such as “quadrupeds” versus “winged creatures” or “wild beasts” versus “domestic animals”), early Chinese taxonomies represent a dynamic and unstable attempt at zoological classification for what we call today “fish” and “invertebrates.”

Wei, Lia. Ph.D. University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2018.

A Comparative Study of Burial Caves South of the Yangzi river: Highland Routes and Frontier Communities at the Fall of the Han Empire (2nd to 3rd century CE). Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI (Publication No. 11010819).

At the fall of the Han Empire, deep-cut valleys south of the Yangzi were blooming with unprecedented activity: ostentatious rock-cut cemeteries, decorated and inscribed, turned the riverside cliffs into theatrical villages of the dead. This thesis uses a typology of rock-cut burials to map

the distribution of frontier groups located on major and minor southern tributaries of the upper Yangzi, at the interface between lowland and highland. Epigraphic material is integrated with the archaeological evidence, with the latter being, in large part, first-hand material collected via direct personal survey of burial chambers cut in sandstone cliffs. This dataset is articulated particularly carefully in locational terms to produce an extended analysis of large-scale craft production and funerary expression while Han imperial presence declines on its southwest frontier (2nd–3rd century c.e.). While existing studies have investigated the origin of elite rock-cut tombs under the Western Han (2nd–1st century b.c.e.) in the Central Plains, and the popularity of rock-cut tombs under the Eastern Han (1st–2nd century c.e.) in the Sichuan basin, they have relied on only a few excavated tombs and historical texts. These studies have not addressed the type of burials identified in this study or the specific environment south of the Yangzi River, which, apart from being an ecological boundary, was also a key political and cultural frontier. The funerary landscape investigated here elucidates the role of frontier groups in times of imperial collapse, and the topographic strategies whereby they constructed their identity. The thesis shows how, in a context of political weakening, secondary trade routes are inhabited by increasingly localized and diversified communities, diverging from funerary practices in the civilizational centers of the plains of Sichuan and the main course of the Yangzi River.