

Society for East Asian Archaeology Newsletter

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SEAA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first issue of the SEAA Newsletter! Planned and designed by Mitchell Ma (SEAA Social Media Coordinator) and Andrew Womack (SEAA Web Editor), the newsletter is meant to facilitate communication with the SEAA membership, a goal which the Society sees as central to its mission of assembling and disseminating information about recent and current developments in the field of East Asian archaeology, as well as promoting the discipline to a broader audience.

Highlights of this first issue include information about the upcoming SEAA Online Student Conference and the SEAA Student Award Program, as well as notes from exciting new research and excavation projects in China. While the specific content of each newsletter is likely to change based on current events and needs, we expect regular features to include information on – or links to – items such as grants and awards, academic and employment opportunities, relevant journal contents, discipline relevant events (such as SEAA and other conferences), as well as occasional synopses of research carried out by members.

We hope you enjoy and make good use of the newsletter. Should you have suggestions about its contents, or wish to contribute items to it, feel free to contact the Web Editor directly.

Francis Allard
President
SEAA

2021 SEAA ONLINE STUDENT CONFERENCE-CALL FOR PAPERS

The SEAA 2021 Online Student Conference will be co-hosted by SEAA and Professor Sungjoo Lee and colleagues at Kyungpook National University from June 26-28, 2021.

The focus of the conference is undergraduate and graduate student research. We are accepting proposals for presentations or short films on all topics that highlight the growth and depth of East Asian archaeology in Korea, China, and Japan and adjacent regions, such as Southeast Asia, the Pacific, North Asia, Central Asia, and the East Asian diaspora. Examples of possible topics include but are not limited to: scientific approaches to the archaeology of East Asia, theoretical themes that crosscut geographical boundaries, and studies of particular sites, regions, and cultures.

Proposal deadline: April 1, 2021

Conference registration is open to all, regardless of SEAA membership status, and is free of charge. More details at: <https://seaa-web.org/conference/upcoming/about>

Grants and Awards

SEAA Student Award Program

The SEAA Student Award Program will be made to two undergraduate and two graduate students in conjunction with SEAA's worldwide conferences. Applicants are expected to submit papers that contribute to the discipline through the reporting of original field research, novel interpretations of published archaeological data, or thought-provoking theoretical and methodological perspectives on the practice of archaeology in East Asia. As a condition of the award, students are expected to present their papers at the SEAA (virtual) conference in June 2021.

Closing date: April 1, 2021

More details at <https://seaa-web.org/conference/upcoming/seaa-student-award-program>

Academic and Employment Opportunities

Louis Frieberg Post-doctoral Fellowships

The Louis Frieberg Center for East Asian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is offering post-doctoral fellowships for the 2021-2022 academic year. The post-docs are open to scholars in the humanities and social sciences specializing in East Asia.

Closing date: April 1, 2021

More details at: <https://seaa-web.org/news-blog/jobs/louis-frieberg-post-doctoral-fellowships>

Doctoral Scholarships at Hebrew University for the project "The Wall: People and Ecology in Medieval Mongolia and China"

The European Research Council Advanced Grant project: The Wall: People and Ecology in Medieval Mongolia and China at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is offering doctoral scholarships beginning in October 2021. "The Wall" is an interdisciplinary project which combines archaeological, historical and paleo-climatic research. It addresses what is, perhaps, the most enigmatic episode of 'Great Wall' construction in China and Mongolia.

Closing date: March 31, 2021

More details at: <https://seaa-web.org/news-blog/jobs/doctoral-scholarships-hebrew-university-project-wall-people-and-ecology-medieval>

PhD Opportunity: The Asian Sphere: Trans-Cultural Flows Program

The Asian Sphere is calling for doctoral students for the 2021-22 school year. The Asian Sphere is a structured graduate program of excellence that focuses on various aspects of the entire Asian continent as a continuous civilizational zone. It addresses cross-regional contacts and processes among Asian societies, cultures and states, as well as between Asia and other continents throughout history until present time.

Closing date: April 15, 2021

More Details at: <https://seaa-web.org/news-blog/jobs/phd-opportunity-asian-sphere-trans-cultural-flows-program%C2%A0>

Notes from the Field/Lab

On the advancement of agriculture during the Pre-Qin period in the Central Plain of China from archaeobotanical findings

By Hua Zhong, Institute of Archaeology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

The Central Plain in China has been a core area of research, including on the origin of Chinese civilization, the process of social complexity, the formation of early states, etc. Throughout the Pre-Qin period, there were at least three profound changes in agriculture in this region. These developments demonstrate local advancements as well as deeply influencing trends of cultural development.

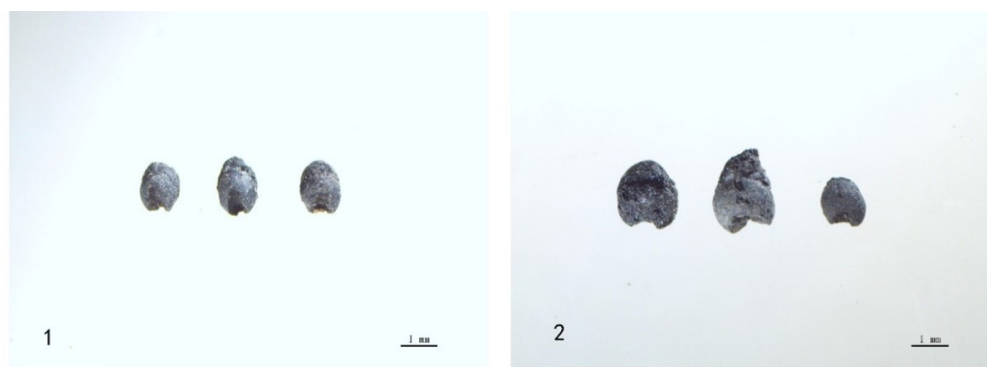


Fig. 1 Charred seeds from the Xipo site during the Miaodigou period
(1. Foxtail millet; 2. Broomcorn millet)

The first big change in agriculture happened during the Miaodigou Period (6000-5500 B.P.). Foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*) became the dominant crop over broomcorn millet (*Panicum miliaceum*) and farming activities, became the main mode of subsistence over hunting and gathering. Further, dry-farming systems and farming society were established as well. These significant changes improved land utilization and average output, offering the possibility of expanding the Miaodigou people.

The second change in the agriculture of the Central Plain took place in the Longshan period (4600-3900 a B.P.). Although a dry-farming system dominated by foxtail millet was still predominate, the importance of rice (*Oryza sativa*) and soybeans (*Glycine max*) increased. The rising status of rice during the Longshan period was unprecedented, which may have benefited from the transformation of marshes and flood land in paddy fields, or the implementation of irrigation, both requiring a much higher labor input. Soybeans probably provided considerable vegetable protein while also supplementing

soil fertility. During the Longshan period, the increase of cultivated area and crop yield, laid an important foundation for rising social complexity, and the formation of early civilization in the Central Plain.

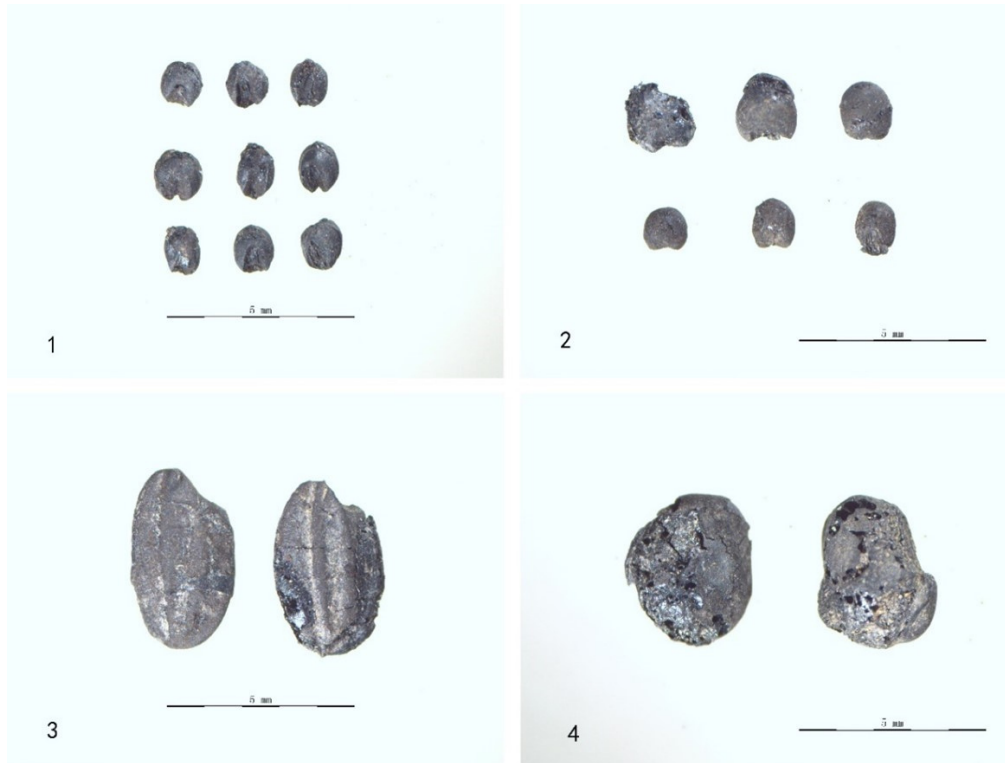


Fig.2 Charred seeds from the Wanggedang site during the Longshan period (1. Foxtail millet; 2. Broomcorn millet; 3. Rice; 4. Soybean)

The third change appeared during the Erligang period (early and middle Shang dynasty), when wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) was adopted into the local farming system. From the recent archaeobotanical evidence, the earliest wheat found in China was from the Jiaodong Peninsula of Shandong during the Longshan period. However, in both the Jiaodong Peninsula and the Central Plain, discoveries of early wheat have been sporadic. A more obvious shift towards wheat cultivation in the Central Plain was during the Erligang period. Though foxtail millet was still the dominant crop, the quantity and status of wheat increased in this region. As an early state capital at that time, Erligang farmers may have alleviated risks associated with reliance on traditional millet agriculture by supplementing crops with wheat.

These three profound changes in the agriculture of the Central Plain during the Pre-Qin period, which reflect advancement of agriculture compared with surrounding regions, were closely connected with the local environment and the development of local culture. The introduction of new crops and adjustment of older ones demonstrates that farmers

new crops and adjustment of older ones demonstrates in this region were regularly involving improving the nutritional quality and reliability for agricultural products. By increasing agricultural yield of farmland, and the reutilization of barren areas, the continual needs from an increasing population could be met in the Central Plain. Additionally, this unique development pathway also contains the internal motivation of the establishment of agricultural society and the formation of early civilization, distinguishing developments in this region from surrounding areas.

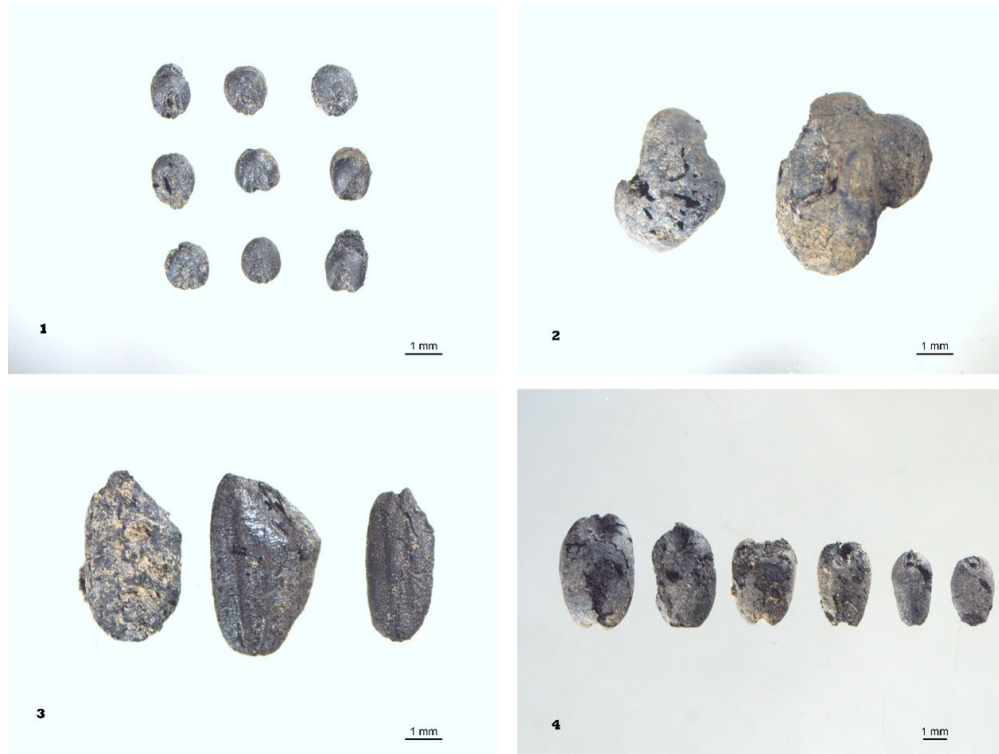


Fig.3 Charred seeds from the Xiaoshuangqiao site during the Erligang period (1. Foxtail millet; 2. Soybean; 3. Rice; 4. wheat)

Excavating Erlitou

Fei Zhang, Department of Archaeology and Museology, Shandong University



Excavation in Erlitou Site in 2020 (Photo Credit: Erlitou Working Team, Institute of Archaeology, CASS)

The Erlitou site 二里头, located in Yanshi City, Henan Province, China, dates back more than 3500 years. The site covers an area of 3 million square meters and is the largest settlement in East Asia during the first half of the second millennium BC. During 60 years of excavation, there have been many major discoveries at the Erlitou site, including bronze ritual vessels, various turquoise wares, jades, lacquers, and ceramics.

Erlitou is a large-scale city that shows clear urban planning. Sacrificial sites and areas have been found inside and outside the palace-temple complex. An important craft production area is located south of the palace and includes the earliest bronze casting and turquoise workshops. The latest findings indicate that Erlitou is divided into nine sub-areas by city walls and roads. In each area, there are residential areas and cemeteries of different families or lineages (家族). This is a departure from the large public cemeteries, residences, and burial areas of the preceding late Neolithic period and shows much resemblance to the patterns exhibited in the Shang ruins of Zhengzhou Shangcheng in Zhengzhou and Yinxu in Anyang.

Erlitou has been excavated for 60 years by three generations of scholars and researchers, who have devoted their lives to archaeology. Today, as part of the fourth generation of archaeologists at Erlitou, I carry on their legacy. I believe that with further excavation, we will continue to learn more about the origins of not only the site but Chinese civilization as well. It is worth mentioning that the Erlitou Xiadu Site Museum and Erlitou Archaeological Site Park were completed and opened in 2019, which played a huge role in promoting public awareness of Erlitou and East Asian archaeology.

SEAA Newsletter submission Guidelines

New fieldwork or research discoveries? Do you have anything to share about your experience in East Asian archaeology? Please write to us!

- Articles should be limited to 500 words.
- Please include a title for your article.
- To submit, e-mail: web-editor@seaa-web.org
- Include "SEAA newsletter submission" in the subject line of your submission e-mail.
- Include your first name, last name and your affiliations in your message. Your name will appear in the newsletter (unless you ask to be anonymous).
- Articles should be sent as attachments in Word (.doc or .docx).
- You are highly encouraged to submit images along with your articles. But be sure they fall into one of these categories: (1) your own work, (2) public domain or (3) fair use.

Please note that SEAA reserves the right to carry out minor editing, or to decline contributions which are not in keeping with the society's mission of topical scope.

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