

Conference Report submitted to Harvard-Yenching Institute

PROPOSAL FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE PREHISTORY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU, SICHUAN UNIVERSITY

August 21-24, 2011

Rowan Flad (Department of Anthropology, Harvard University)

Hongliang LU (Department of Archaeology, Sichuan University, 2009-2010 HYI Visiting Scholar)

SUMMARY

The Tibetan Plateau is one of the most challenging areas for human life and also a region little understood by modern archaeology. Despite a series of explorations in recent decades, political and linguistic barriers make academic exchange extremely difficult. Therefore, the purpose of this international conference was to pull together current research focused on the prehistory of the Tibetan Plateau.



Prof. Li Yongxian (Sichuan University) and Prof. Rowan Flad (Harvard University) during the closing discussion.

Through this gathering we aimed to provide a forum for direct exchange between scholars that crosses national, ethnic and political boundaries and thereby build a foundation for future cooperation among the participants.

These were the main goals of the conference stated in the proposal, and we feel the conference fully realized our goals and has laid a tremendous foundation for future research. In total, 42 scholars from ten countries (including China, Taiwan, Nepal, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, South Korea, the US, Germany, and Belgium) registered for the conference, and there was representation from almost all of the Western province-level administrative units of China, including Tibet, Xinjiang, Gansu, Qinghai, and Sichuan). The conference was attended by over 100 people, many of them students and researchers in Sichuan.



Prof. Ofer Bar-Yosef (Harvard) and PhD student Jade Guedes (Harvard).

Intellectually, the conference provided an incredibly rich and diverse set of presentations, with speakers dealing with topics as wide ranging as Paleolithic archaeology, migration, ancient DNA, ecology, textual studies, and historical research. We include with this report a full conference schedule and addendum.

The Following Harvard Affiliates Attending:

Harvard Professors (3)

Ofer BAR-YOSEF (Department of Anthropology, Harvard University)

Rowan FLAD (Department of Anthropology, Harvard University)

Leonard W.J. van der KUIJP (Department of Sanskrit and India studies, Harvard University)

Current Harvard Student (1)

Jade D'alpoim GUEDES (Department of Anthropology, Harvard University)

Former Harvard College Student (1)

Katherine BRUNSON (Department of Anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles)

Former Harvard-Yenching Visiting scholars (6)

LU Hongliang (Department of Archaeology, Sichuan University, 2009-2010 Visiting Scholar)

ZHANG Changhong (Center for Chinese Tibetology, Sichuan University, 2008-2009 Visiting Scholar)

WU Xiaohong (Department of Archaeology, Peking University, 2009-2010 Visiting Scholar)

Pochan CHEN (Department of Anthropology, National Taiwan University, 2010-2011 Visiting Scholar)

BAI Bin (Department of Archaeology, Sichuan University, 1998-1999 Visiting Scholar)

LI Shuicheng (Department of Archaeology, Peking University, 2000 Visiting Scholar)

Former Fairbank Center Visiting Scholar at Harvard (1)

KIM Sungsoo (Seoul National University of Science and Technology, 2005-2006 Visiting Scholar)

In Addition, the Following International Scholars Attended the Conference:

American and European Professors / Graduate Students (5)

Mark.ALDENDERFER, University of California, Merced

John BELLEZZA, University of Virginia

Georg MIEHE, Marburg University

Christine LEE, Institute of Vertebrate



Harvard affiliates attending conference. From left to right: Zhang, Kim, Brunson, Li, Flad (rear), Bar-Yosef (front), Guedes, Chen, Kuijp, Wu, Lu, Bai.



Prof. Leonard van der Kuijp (Harvard)

Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, Beijing
Anke HEIN, University of California, Los Angeles

Nepal (1)

Mohan Sing LAMA, Department of Archaeology, Government of Nepal

India (3)

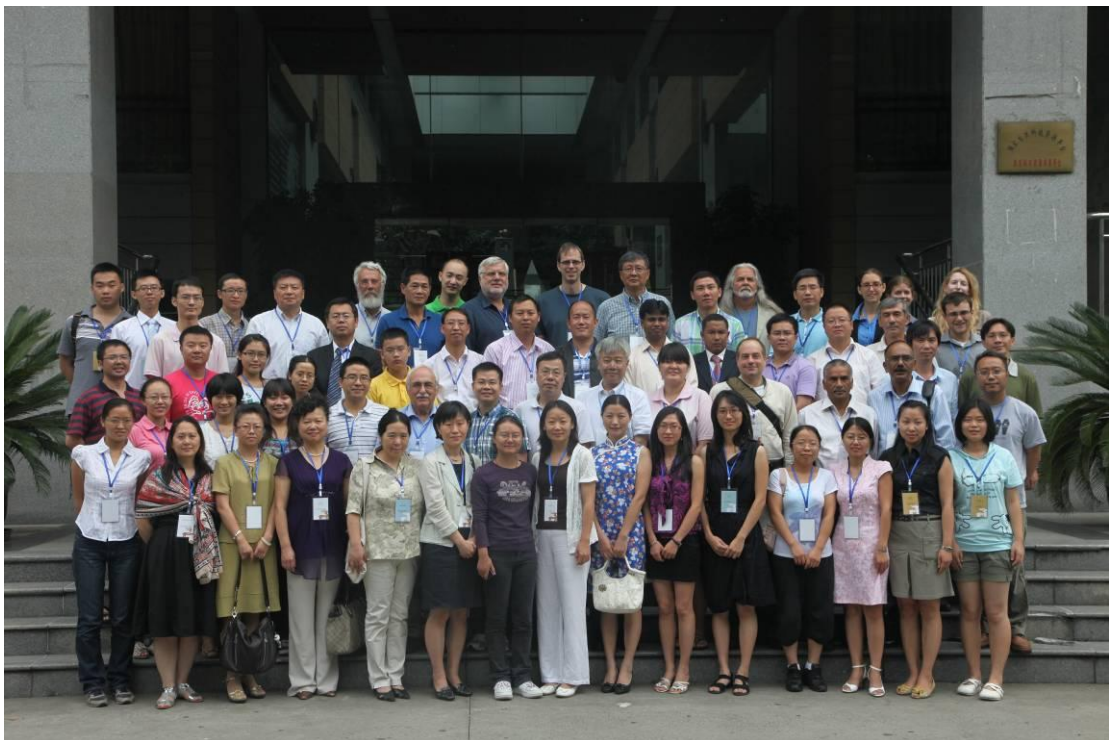
Vinod NAUTIYAL, Garhwal University, India

R. C. BHATT, Garhwal University, India

Manjil HAZARIKA, Indian Archaeological Study, Leiden University

Bhutan (1)

Dorji PENJORE, The Center for Bhutan Studies



Participants in the International Conference on the Prehistory of the Tibetan Plateau.

PROGRAM

The program consisted of a series of panel sessions during which each presentation was given in both English and Chinese, followed by discussion and questions. In addition, there was an open forum for discussing future collaboration during the evening of the second day of the conference, and discussions continued during breaks and meals.

PUBLICATIONS

A publication is being planned that will bring together the main findings of participants and also will stimulate future collaboration. The intention is to publish this volume in China bilingually (in Chinese and English) to maximize the impact of the contents. The participants unanimously agreed that there was much information presented at the conference that was new to many of the participants, and that a publication would be a valuable and productive way to continue the cross border and cross disciplinary dialogue that was started at the conference. Sichuan University will provide financial support for the publication.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Ofer Bar-Yosef (Harvard), Huo Wei (Sichuan University) and Lu Hongliang (Sichuan University)