

in relation to rhythm and syllabification. Chapter 3 considers declarative utterances within the framework of Autosegmental Metrical Theory, focusing on phrasal prominence and boundary signalling. An inventory of tonal gesture is identified, based on acoustic data, and the question of what is the tone-bearing unit in Mongolian is discussed. In chapter 4 focal accent and boundary signalling in interrogative utterances is considered, and a short description of the tonal contours of pragmatically non-neutral utterances is given.

After a short summary in chapter 5 of findings and conclusions drawn from the data, twenty-five pages of appendixes give the material used during the investigation.

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EAST ASIA

ROBERT L. THORP:

China in the Early Bronze Age: Shang Civilization.

(Encounters with Asia Series.) xxvii, 292 pp. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006. £39. 0 81223910 5.

When K. C. Chang published his *Shang Civilization* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), over a quarter of century ago, he wrote: “the early historiography of the Shang civilization is still in a most fluid state. I hope my readers will watch with me for future developments with keen anticipation and openness of mind” (p. 370). Robert Thorp’s new publication *China in the Early Bronze Age: Shang Civilization* is a timely book. It introduces the most recent archaeological discoveries, and addresses some new questions about the development of the Bronze Age in China. Thorp clearly takes K. C. Chang as his spiritual mentor, as he dedicates his book to Chang’s memory.

In his Prolegomena to *Shang Civilization*, Chang listed five approaches to the study of the Shang, which he called the “five doors to Shang”: historical texts, ritual bronzes, oracle bone inscriptions, archaeology, and theoretical models. At that time, students of the Shang had to rely largely on traditional historiography, the art historical approach to Shang bronzes, and epigraphic research on oracle bone inscriptions; archaeological data were limited and came mainly from excavations conducted in the 1930s and early 1950s. Although we cannot say that those “five doors” are no longer useable and should be shut, the emphasis has certainly shifted. Thorp’s new book is very much archaeologically oriented and sets out a new framework.

It is divided into five main chapters, along with a preface, introduction, afterword, and suggested readings. The introduction gives a summary of the geographical and cultural settings of the terminal phase of the Neolithic period and the rise of the Bronze Age. In the third millennium BCE, in both north and south China, there was increased interaction between the various regional cultures which led to the emergence of walled cities and possibly the formation of early states. But, as Thorp argues, it is the bronze cultures of Erlitou (c. 1900–1500 BCE) and Erligang (c. 1600–1300 BCE) that qualify as the full-fledged state. Chapters 1 and 2 then provide an overview of the archaeological data from the Erlitou and Erligang cultures. They cover a wide range of information: brief backgrounds to archaeology at the sites, architectural remains, burials, pottery, bronzes and jades. Moreover, these chapters

investigate the regional and interregional networks between Erlitou and Erligang and other contemporary cultures. In this context, many new or newly published discoveries such as the Dadianzi of the Lower Xiajiadian culture (Inner Mongolia), Panlongcheng (Hubei), and Xin'gan Dayangzhou (Jiangxi) bronzes are discussed. Thorp presents his view that the myriad interactions between the Erligang culture and regional cultures in the south created hybrids such as the Dayangzhou bronzes. When describing the Erlitou and Erligang bronze cultures, he has followed the new trend in Western academic circles, led by Robert Bagley (M. Loewe and E. L. Shaughnessy (eds), *Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 BC*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 124–231), which is to avoid the use of the names “Xia” and “Shang”. Regarding the Erlitou culture, Thorp also comments on the question of “the search for the Xia”. While the majority of Chinese archaeologists now believe that the Erlitou culture dates from the Xia dynasty, and Erligang from the Shang, many Western scholars remain sceptical.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the less controversial period: the late Shang dynasty (c. 1300–1046 BCE) at Anyang and its religious activities. The early history and more recent archaeological advancements are introduced in a brief and easily accessible way, and include the significant discovery of the walled city to the north of the Huan river in the late 1990s and early 2000s. There is rich information, particularly about the craft industries such as bronze, bone and jade. On Shang religion, Thorp discusses the nature of Shang divination, sacrificial rites, temples and the functions of ritual bronzes. He has also offered insights into the links between bronze inscriptions and social relationships. Similar inscriptions have been found in different tombs in Anyang, indicating the existence of reciprocal and peer obligations. Many Anyang inscriptions have been found at some distance from Anyang, which may also reveal some sort of relationship between the Anyang elite and other regional powers.

Chapter 5 is entitled “The late Shang world”, and discusses the cultural environment of late Shang dynasty and bronze cultures of several macro-regions. It is significant that the traditional Anyang-centred view is no longer held; thus, the Shang culture is defined in a much broader and more diverse fashion. There was clearly an exchange of natural resources, technology and exotic goods between Anyang and other regional cultures of the north, north-west, south and south-west. The discussion of the new material from the Sanxingdui and Jinsha discoveries in Sichuan at the end of the book certainly raises more questions than it answers. We keenly anticipate further research in this area in the future.

I truly admire this book. Robert L. Thorp has packed a massive amount of information in a concise and easily accessible way into well-organized chapters. The author is the master of his own material, and brings much of his own up-to-date site-based research and experience. This book is clearly the result of many years of intensive research, but appears to the reader to be an effortless achievement. The publisher and the editor should be congratulated for producing a handsome and user-friendly book; the twenty boxed features on some key-topics are particularly helpful. Students who want to embark on a fascinating journey into the Chinese Bronze Age should start with this book.

Wang Tao