

EAS/REL 327: Religion, Poetry, and Memory in Ancient China

Fall 2012, T 1:30-4:20

Prof. Martin Kern

Email: mkern@princeton.edu

Office hours: W 3:00-4:00, 210 Jones Hall

The seminar explores the interplay of religious and aesthetic—especially poetic—practice in ancient China and how the performance of texts and the use of images and objects in religious and social spaces contributed to the formation of Chinese cultural memory and identity. Combining anthropological, art historical, and literary analysis, the emphasis is on close analysis of original texts (in translation) and artifacts, including objects in the Princeton Art Museum.

Readings: 150 pages/week

Writing Assignments:

- (a) Weekly postings on Blackboard;
- (b) Midterm paper 12 pages;
- (c) Final paper 15-20 pages.

Grading:

- (a) Class participation 50%;
- (b) Midterm paper 20%;
- (c) Final paper 30%

Week 1: The Shi Qiang Pan / Princeton Art Museum Visit

Week 2: Memory, Performance, Truth

- * Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 41-71, 109-113.
- * Rosalind Thomas, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, 101-127.
- * Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 1-45, 122-138.
- * Marcel Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, 35-88, 146-185.

Week 3: Art, Divination, and the Beginnings of Ancestor Worship

- * David N. Keightley, "The Making of the Ancestors," in John Lagerwey (ed.), *Religion and Chinese Society*, vol. 1, 3-63.
- * Jessica Rawson, "Late Shang Bronze Design," in Roderick Whitfield (ed.), *The Problem of Meaning in Early Chinese Ritual Bronzes*, 67-95.
- * Sarah Allan, *The Shape of the Turtle*, 124-170, 199-203.
- * Robert W. Bagley, "Meaning and Explanation," in Roderick Whitfield (ed.), *The Problem of Meaning in Early Chinese Ritual Bronzes*, 34-55.

Week 4: Performance and Identity

- * Stanley J. Tambiah, *Culture, Thought, and Social Action*, 123-166, 382-389.
- * Marcel Bloch, "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation," in *European Journal of Sociology* 15.1 (1974), 55-81.
- * Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Before Confucius*, 165-195.

- * C.H. Wang, *From Ritual to Allegory*, 1-51.
- * Selections from the *Classic of Poetry (Sacrificial hymns)*.

Week 5: Origin and Reproduction

- * Martin Kern, "Bronze Inscriptions, the *Shijing* and the *Shangshu*: The Evolution of the Ancestral Sacrifice during the Western Zhou," in John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski (eds.), *Early Chinese Religion, Part One: Shang through Han (1250 BC-220 AD)*, vol. 1, 143-200.
- * Stephen Owen, "Reproduction in the *Shijing*," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61.2 (2001), 287-315.
- * C.H. Wang, *From Ritual to Allegory*, 73-114.
- * Selections from the *Classic of Poetry (Daya)*.

Week 6: Writing and Remembrance

- * Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory*, 81-121.
- * Martin Kern, "Announcements from the Mountains: The Stele Inscriptions of the Qin First Emperor," in Fritz-Heiner Mutschler and Achim Mittag (eds.), *Conceiving the Empire: China and Rome Compared*, 217-240.
- * Robert E. Harrist, Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China*, 17-31, 219-270, 301-303, 339-349.

Week 7: The Beginnings of Political Philosophy

- * David Schaberg, "Command and the Content of Tradition," in Christopher Lupke (ed.), *the Magnitude of Ming*, 23-48.
- * Martin Kern, "Ideologies of Kingship in the 'Yaodian': Style, Argument, and Purpose" (ms.).
- * Selections from the *Classic of Documents*.

Week 8: Tombs and Souls

- * Yü Ying-shih, "O Soul Come Back!," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47.2 (1987): 363-395.
- * Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 204-212.
- * Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs*, 7-84, 234-241.

Week 9: The Spirit Journey

- * Lillian Lan-ying Tseng, *Picturing Heaven in Early China*, 149-233, 394-400.
- * Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 162-188.
- * David Hawkes, "The Quest of the Goddess," in Cyril Birch (ed.), *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, 43-68.

Week 10: Writing for the Dead—and for the Living

- * K. E. Brashier, "Eastern Han Commemorative Stelae: Laying the Cornerstones of Public Memory," in John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski (eds.), *Early Chinese Religion, Part One: Shang through Han (1250 BC-220 AD)*, vol. 2, 1027-1059.
- * K. E. Brashier, "Longevity Like Metal and Stone," *T'oung Pao* 81.4-5 (1995), 201-229.
- * Miranda Brown, *The Politics of Mourning in Early China*, 41-63, 85-126, 151-157, 163-174.

Week 11: Truth and History

- * David Schaberg, "Song and the Historical Imagination in Early China," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 59.2 (1999), 305-61.

- * Martin Kern, "The Poetry of Han Historiography," in *Early Medieval China* 10-11.1 (2004), 23-65.
- * Wai-yee Li, "Knowledge and Skepticism in Ancient Chinese Historiography," in Christina Shugglesworth Kraus (ed.), *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, 27-54.
- * Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 87-101.
- * Stephen Durrant, "Truth Claims in *Shiji*," in Achim Mittag et al. (eds.), *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism, and Ideology*, 93-113.

Week 12: The Historian's Voice

- * Stephen Durrant, *The Cloudy Mirror*, 1-45, 71-98, 156-171, 178-185.
- * Michael Nylan, "Sima Qian: A True Historian?," in *Early China* 23-24 (1998-99), 203-246.
- * Wai-yee Li, "The Idea of Authority in the *Shih chi (Records of the Historian)*," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54.2 (1994), 345-405.
- * Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*, 135-144.