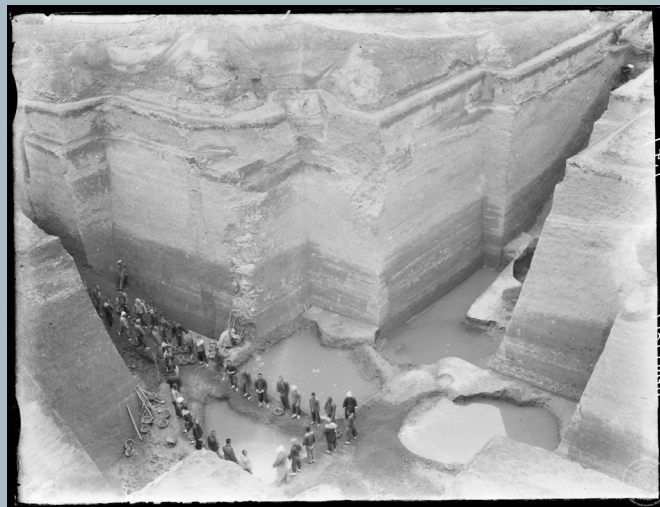


Gastvortrag

PROF. DAME **JESSICA RAWSON** (OXFORD)

China's Great Tombs: a new route to the past and to China today



While the ancient world is often represented by the pyramids of Egypt, China's longer, remarkable tomb tradition is hardly ever mentioned. Yet all the fine bronzes, jades and ceramics in our museums which tell us about China's past – at least down to the Tang dynasty (618-906 AD) – come from these tombs. These riches were essential provisions for the after-life of emperors and lords, the result of a long-established respect for the powers of the ancestors in the lives of their descendants. The talk will illustrate the early stages of this central Chinese tradition from the Neolithic (c. 3000 BC) to the tomb of the First Emperor in the third century BC. We can follow the later developments in the immense underground structures for the emperors of the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties near Beijing.

In reviewing this important funerary tradition and the ancestor cult, the talk will also consider China's geography, geology and climate, which ensured that China's culture developed independently from the more familiar early cities and states of ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. The deep tombs and an architecture of platforms of pounded earth, supporting wooden structures, were the outcomes the immense deposits of wind and waterborne loess, which hid the underlying plateaux of stone and rock from the workforce and allowed excavation of very deep graves. Large populations who carried out these major architectural and engineering works benefitted also from the climate of the Pacific Monsoon, which, with summer rain, enabled nutritious harvests of rice. The foundations of this culture are therefore to be found in the very specific environment of the lands we now call China.

Mittwoch, 24. Januar 2024, 18 Uhr c.t.

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Im Anschluss findet ein Stehempfang statt.

Wir bitten um Anmeldung unter Sekretariat@ostasien.fak12.uni-muenchen.de