New Archaeological Evidence for the Origins of Chinese Civilization

Speaker: Jianping Yi
Tuesday, November 27
3:30 to 5:00PM
UA Student Union Rincon Room

Research on the origins of Chinese civilization is one of the hottest topics in China. After the completion of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou Chronology Project, in 2001 Chinese scholars (most of them archeologists) initiated another large-scale endeavor to investigate the origins of Chinese civilization. Several dozens of Chinese universities are involved in this project. At present, the research focuses on the timing, locations, and causes for the rise of Chinese civilization. Before 2006, most research was conducted in the Central Plain focusing on the period between 2,500 BC and 1,500 BC. After 2006, research has been extended to the upper, middle, and lower reaches of the Yellow River, the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, and the West Liao River basin prior to 3,500 BC. What accomplishments have been achieved by Chinese scholars? What difficulties have the researchers encountered? Have they found sufficient evidence to support the claim that Chinese civilization has a history of 5,000 years? In this fascinating talk, Professor Yi Jianping from Beijing will answer these questions based on new discoveries from excavations at sites such as Lingjiatan, Niulianghe, Liangzhu, Shijiahe, Xinmi Xinzhai, Taosi, and Erlitou during the past few decades.