

China Before China



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Johan Gunnar Andersson (1874-1960) was a 40-year-old Swedish geologist in 1914 when he was invited to become a Mining Advisor to the Chinese government and its

ministry for agriculture and commerce. His career took a sharp turn after he met Ding Wenjiang (1887-1936), the Chinese scientist, intellectual and politician of the newly established Chinese republic. Together, they would invent the science of Chinese paleontology and prehistory.

The book *China Before China* was published in 2004 in conjunction with a new, permanent exhibit at Stockholm's Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities of the archaeological collections brought back by Andersson from his collaborative research between 1914 and 1925. The book examines Andersson's work with Ding and other important scholars such as Li Ji and Pei Wenzhong on the sites of Zhoukoudian, Yangshao and Banshan.

Their collaboration was at a crucial time in Chinese society. The culture of China before 'the three emperors' of recorded history was unknown at the time; the archaeologists discovered Neolithic China, clearly related to the later cultures, but without bronze and never mentioned in the written Chinese histories.

China before China documents Andersson's work in China, and the after effects, within a political framework. Among other things, the book details how Andersson was perceived in China, how the collaborations proceeded, what difficulties they met, and how his own personal concepts of how the world worked affected his interpretations of the Yangshao culture sites. Like many western scholars of his day, Andersson looked for western origins of Neolithic Chinese culture. He was wrong; but the questions he asked were of importance to figuring out the puzzle of Neolithic prehistory.

Lavishly illustrated with excavation photographs, and copies of Andersson's field notes and correspondence, [*China before China* is interesting in a number of ways, not the least for its insight into how the science of archaeology developed and how international cooperation works--and doesn't work.

I heartily recommend this fascinating peek into the history of the discipline of archaeology. Written simultaneously in Chinese and English, the book is accessible and intriguing.

作者介绍:

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评论

展览的说明，较为简单，内容在作者的其它书中都能看到（另我寻思着为啥标题里要加个丁文江？

安特生、丁文江。“配合瑞典东方博物馆的常设展览而作”。英文流畅，中文翻译稍显拖沓生硬。译者请努力@国家图书馆

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