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***“Barbarians” and Bronzes: The Origin of Civilization  
In Ancient Vietnam***

by Nam C. Kim, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Raymond L. Den Adel Memorial Lecture #22

Presented by ***The Archaeological Institute of America, Rockford Society***  
in collaboration with  
The Burpee Museum of Natural History  
and the Department of Languages, Philosophy, Religion, and Cultures of Rockford University  
on **Tuesday, October 18, 2022**  
at **7:30 P.M.**  
in the **Burpee Museum of Natural History**  
**737 North Main Street**  
**Rockford, Illinois**

Two thousand years ago, China’s Han Empire stretched its imperial grasp beyond the mountains far to the south, reaching into the domains of “barbarians”. Along its southernmost periphery lay the Red River Valley (RRV) of present-day Vietnam. In their chronicles, the Han claimed that they had “civilized” the RRV’s “barbarians”. In contrast, many Vietnamese believe this time and location represents the birthplace of an indigenous, Vietnamese civilization that predates Han arrival. This lecture presents new archaeological research that addresses ongoing, intense, and sometimes nationalistic debates. Specifically, it highlights recent investigations at the Co Loa site, considered to be the first capital of ancient Vietnam.

Nam C. Kim is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the current Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies on its campus. He holds degrees in anthropology (PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago), political science (MA, New York University) and international relations (BA, University of Pennsylvania). As an anthropological archaeologist, he has conducted research in various countries. His research deals with early civilizations and the significance of the material past for modern-day stakeholders. He is especially interested in the archaeological history of organized violence and warfare. Since 2005 he has been conducting archaeological fieldwork in Vietnam at the Co Loa settlement in the Red River Delta. A heavily fortified site located near modern-day Hanoi, Co Loa is connected to Vietnamese legendary accounts and is viewed as an important foundation for Vietnamese civilization.

His work has been featured in various podcast interviews and a documentary (on the History Hit website). He has also authored several articles and books. *The Origins of Ancient Vietnam* (2015) provides a glimpse into the foundations of Vietnamese civilization, as seen through the archaeological record. *Emergent Warfare in Our Evolutionary Past* (2018, co-authored with Marc Kissel) provides a comprehensive view on the origins of war within the history of humanity. It seeks to answer the questions about how far back in time we can see warfare, and whether or not organized violence is somehow innate within our species.

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