

## **HIEA 128: HISTORY OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA**

Fall Quarter, 2009

Time: Tu Th, 2:00-3:20

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Place: Peterson 103

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Office Hours: Th 10AM - noon

or by appointment

### **Introduction**

This course introduces the history of material culture in China. We will begin with definitions of material culture, then look at its importance in the context of Chinese history and culture. One underlying assumption is that things change over time in response to historical forces. Another is that objects reflect people's beliefs and values and that we can use them to analyze these beliefs and values. We will study various types of things (houses, works of art, clothing, religious artifacts and paraphernalia) as well as ways of making and using things. Our approach is interdisciplinary: that is, we use ideas and materials from several academic disciplines in order to examine material culture in China as thoroughly as we can. Disciplines include history, architecture, design, technology, archaeology, religious studies, anthropology, sociology, and critical gender studies. We read both primary and secondary sources, and view art and film as well as texts.

### **Requirements**

There are no prerequisites. Each student should come to class with the reading for that day finished, participate in discussions, and complete all assignments. You must complete all required assignments to pass the class. There are four. First, each student will bring something connected to material culture in China to share with the class (10% of your grade). We will schedule this to take place at the beginning of class throughout the quarter. Second, there will be an in-class midterm exam consisting of essays and identifications (30%). Third, a project or paper (10 pages) is due on the last day of classes (30%). Suitable projects include small research topics, site visits, fieldwork, fiction, drama, art, structural or production analysis. You must clear your topic with me by the sixth week. You may do projects together. The fourth and last assignment will be a take-home final exam consisting of essays covering material from after the midterm (30%).

**Required Texts:** listed in the order of use  
Texts are available at the University Book Store.  
They are also available on reserve at Geisel Library.

Ronald Knapp, *China's Living Houses*, University of Hawai'i Press, 1999  
ISBN: 0-8248-2079-7

Dorothy Ko, *Every Step A Lotus*, Berkeley, University of California, 2001  
ISBN: 0-520-23284

Robert Temple, *Genius of China*, Publisher: Inner Traditions International, Ltd, 2007  
ISBN-13: 9781594772177

Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things*, Princeton, Princeton University  
ISBN 0691009570

John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*, Princeton, Princeton University, ISBN 0691096767

Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i, 2004  
ISBN: 0-8248-1888

### **Recommended text**

Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of T'ang Exotics*, University of California Press, 1985  
ISBN 0520054628, 9780520054622

## **TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments are due on day they are listed; books are listed by the author's surname.

### **Week Zero**

Sept. 24      **I.      INTRODUCTION**  
Aims, Issues, Definitions, Requirements  
Assignment: Buy your books; first reading assignment due Tuesday

### **Week One**

**II.      CHINESE HOUSES**

Sept. 29      **A. The House Reflects Hopes and Desires**  
Reading: Knapp, Chapters 1 through 5

Oct. 1      **B. The House Reflects Fears**  
Reading: Knapp, Chapters 6 through 9  
Video: Chinese Shamans

**Week Two**

**III. GENDER AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA**

Oct. 6      **A. Introduction: Cultural Constructions of Gender**  
**B. The Case of Bound Feet**  
Reading: Ko, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

Oct. 8      **C. Women's Bodies, Women's Work, Women's Virtues: Shoe as Text**  
Reading: Ko, Chapters 3 through 5

**Week Three**

**IV. CHINESE SCIENCE: DISCOVERY, INVENTION, AND TECHNOLOGY**

Oct.13      **A. Farming, Astronomy, and Engineering**  
Video: The Genius That Was China  
Reading: Temple, Parts One through Three

Oct. 15      **B. Industrial Technology, Medicine, Math, and Magnetism**  
Reading: Temple, Parts Four Through Seven

**Week Four**

Oct. 20      **C. Physical Sciences, Transportation, Sound, and War**  
Reading: Temple, Parts Eight through Eleven

Oct. 22      **MIDTERM**

## **Week Five**

### **V. HOW CHINESE THINGS WERE MADE**

Oct. 27 **A. Modular Construction: Writing, Bronze, and the Terra Cotta Army**

Reading: Ledderose, Introduction, Chapters 1 through 3

Oct. 29 **B. Modular Construction: Factory Art, Roofs, and Printing**

Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 4 through 6

PAPER OR PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE

## **Week Six**

Nov. 3 **C. Modular Construction: Hell and the Question of Creativity**

Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 7 and 8

### **VI. RELIGION AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA**

Nov. 5 **A. Buddhism**

Reading: Kieschnick, Introduction and Chapter One

## **Week Seven**

Nov. 10 **B. Symbolism and Merit**

Reading: Kieschnick, Chapters Two and Three

Nov. 12 **C. Accidents and Monks' Influence**

Reading: Finish Kieschnick

## **Week Eight**

### **VII. STATUS, ANXIETY, AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN MING CHINA**

Nov. 17 **A. Books and Ideas About Things**

Reading: Clunas, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2

Nov. 19      **B. Words about Things and the Use of Antiques**  
Reading: Clunas, Chapters 3 and 4

**Week Nine**

Nov. 24      **C. Things for Sale and as Causes of Anxiety**  
Reading: Clunas, Chapters 5 and 6 and Conclusion

**Week Ten**

Dec. 1        **VIII. MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINESE MOVIES**

Dec. 3        Student Presentations, Questions, Odds and Ends  
**PROJECT OR PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS**  
**Final Exam handed out at end of class**

**March 17                    FINAL EXAM DUE at 2:30 PM in Prof Cahill's office, HSS 3040**

## PAPER OR PROJECT

You may choose almost anything that fits within the subject matter of our course. You may do a group project. Some possible types of paper or project include:

1. Research paper with a narrow focus
2. Fieldwork, survey, or site report
3. Art history paper
4. Art project, installation, or model
5. Drama or music
6. Fiction or poetry
7. Fake primary sources such as letters, journals, instructions: historical documents of any kind
8. Game/game analysis
9. Literature or film criticism
10. Class presentation or demonstration

The paper or project will be judged on **topic, research, effort, analysis, and the quality of the final product**. Prof Cahill must approve your topic. At least three academic sources are required. Wikipedia is not an academic source, although you may use it to lead you to appropriate sources. You may use DVD or other new media for your final product. Make sure that you use equipment and formats compatible with Professor Cahill's. **CHECK!** If you write a paper, it should be about 10 pages long (double-spaced). A group paper or project would need to be proportionately longer. You may use any standard format for footnotes and bibliography. Papers and projects may not be submitted by e-mail. (You are turning them in on the last day of classes; the chance for loss or bad transmission is too great.)

## DYNASTIES AND THEIR DATES

### B.C.E.

Xia	ca. 2100-1600
Shang	ca. 1600-1028
Zhou	ca. 1027-256
Western Zhou	ca. 1027-771
Eastern Zhou	ca. 770-256
Spring and Autumn	722-468
Warring States	403-221
Qin	221-207
Han	206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.
Former Han	206 B.C.E-8 C.E.

### C.E.

Xin	9-25
Latter Han	25-220
Three Kingdoms	220-265
Wei	220-265
Shu	221-263
Wu	222-280
Jin	265-420
Western Jin	265-317
Eastern Jin	317-420
Six Dynasties	420-589
SOUTHERN	
Liu Song	420-479
Southern Qi	470-502
Southern Liang	502-557
Southern Chen	557-589
NORTHERN	
Northern Wei	386-534
Eastern Wei	534-550
Western Wei	535-577
Northern Qi	550-577
Northern Zhou	557-581

Sui	581-618
Tang	618-907
Zhou	690-705
Five Dynasties	907-960
Liao	916-1125
Song	960-1279
Northern Song	960-1126
Southern Song	1127- 1279
Jin (Jurchen)	1115-1234
Yuan (Mongols)	1260-1368
Ming	1368-1644
Qing	1644-1911
Republic (Taiwan)	1911-
People's Republic	1949-

These dates are based on William H. Nienhauser. *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986