

HIEA 128: HISTORY OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

Winter Quarter, 2009

Time: Tu Th, 12:30 – 1:50

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Place: Peterson 102

Office: HSS 3040

Office Hours: Th 5 – 7 PM

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 society. One underlying assumption is that things reflect people's beliefs and values. We will study various types of things (houses, works of art, clothing, religious artifacts and paraphernalia) as well as ways of inventing, 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. Finally, there 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 Groundworks Books: (858) 452-9625.

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 One

January 6

I. INTRODUCTION

Aims, Issues, Definitions, Requirements

Assignment: Buy your books; first reading assignment due Thursday

II. CHINESE HOUSES

January 8

A. The House Reflects Hopes and Desires

Reading: Knapp, Chapters 1 through 5

Week Two

- January 13 **B. The House Reflects Fears**
Reading: Knapp, Chapters 6 through 9
Video: Chinese Shamans

III. GENDER AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

- January 15 **A. Introduction: Cultural Constructions of Gender**
B. The Case of Bound Feet
Reading: Ko, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

Week Three

- January 20 **C. Women's Bodies, Women's Work, Women's Virtues: Shoe as Text**
Reading: Ko, Chapters 3 through 5

IV. CHINESE SCIENCE: DISCOVERY, INVENTION, AND TECHNOLOGY

- January 22 **A. Farming, Astronomy, and Engineering**
Video: The Genius That Was China
Reading: Temple, Parts One through Three

Week Four

- January 27 **B. Industrial Technology, Medicine, Math, and Magnetism**
Reading: Temple, Parts Four Through Seven

- January 29 **C. Physical Sciences, Transportation, Sound, and War**
Reading: Temple, Parts Eight through Eleven

Week Five

- February 3 **MIDTERM**

V. HOW CHINESE THINGS WERE MADE

February 5 **A. Modular Construction: Writing, Bronze, and the Terra Cotta Army**
Reading: Ledderose, Introduction, Chapters 1 through 3

Week Six

February 10 **B. Modular Construction: Factory Art, Roofs, and Printing**
Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 4 through 6
PAPER OR PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE

February 12 **C. Modular Construction: Hell and the Question of Creativity**
Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 7 and 8

VI. RELIGION AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

Week Seven

February 17 **A. Buddhism**
Reading: Kieschnick, Introduction and Chapter One

February 19 **B. Symbolism and Merit**
Reading: Kieschnick, Chapters Two and Three

Week Eight

February 24 **C. Accidents and Monks' Influence**
Reading: Finish Kieschnick

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

February 26 **A. Books and Ideas About Things**
Reading: Clunas, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2

Week Nine

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

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

Week Ten

March 10 **VIII. MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINESE MOVIES**

March 12 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

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

