

HIEA 128: HISTORY OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

Winter, 2012

Time: Tu Th, 3:30 – 4:50

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Place: Peterson Hall 102

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Office Hours: Th 10 AM - 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 are historical entities; they change over time in response to historical forces. Another is that objects reflect people's beliefs and values. Consequently, we can use them to analyze these beliefs and values. We will study various types of things (houses, works of art, clothing, implements, 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. Students should come to class with the reading for that day finished, participate in discussions, and complete all assignments. You must complete every required assignment to pass the class. There are four. First, each student will bring something connected to material culture in Chinese history to share with the class (10% of your grade). You will briefly show your object, tell how you acquired it, and explain its relevance to the history of Chinese material culture. We will have a sign up sheet and schedule this activity to take place at the beginning of each class throughout the quarter. This assignment will not be graded. Second, there will be an in-class midterm exam consisting of essays and identifications that will count for (30%) of your class grade. Third, a project or paper (approximately 10 pages long) is due on the last day of classes (30%). Suitable projects include narrow research topics, site visits, fieldwork, fiction, drama, art, structural and 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 One

January 10 **I. INTRODUCTION**
Aims, Issues, Definitions, Requirements
Assignment: Buy your books; first reading assignment due Tuesday

II. CHINESE HOUSES

January 12 **A. The House Reflects the Hopes and Desires of Its Occupants**
Reading: Knapp, Chapters 1 through 5

Week Two

January 17 **B. The House Reflects the Fears of Its Occupants**
Reading: Knapp, Chapters 6 through 9
Video: "Chinese Shamans"

III. GENDER AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

January 19 **A. Introduction: Cultural Constructions of Gender**
B. The Case of Bound Feet
Reading: Ko, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

Week Three

January 24 **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 26 **A. Farming, Astronomy, and Engineering**
Reading: Temple, Parts One through Three

Video: "The Genius That Was China"

Week Four

January 31 **B. Industrial Technology, Medicine, Math, and Magnetism**

Reading: Temple, Parts Four Through Seven

February 2 **C. Physical Sciences, Transportation, Sound, and War**

Reading: Temple, Parts Eight through Eleven

Week Five

February 7 **MIDTERM**

V. HOW CHINESE THINGS WERE MADE

February 9 **A. Modular Construction: Writing, Bronze, and the Terra Cotta Army**

Reading: Ledderose, Introduction, Chapters 1 through 3

Week Six

February 14 **B. Modular Construction: Factory Art, Roofs, and Printing**

Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 4 through 6

PAPER OR PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE

February 16 **C. Modular Construction: Hell and the Question of Creativity**

Reading: Ledderose, Chapters 7 and 8

Week Seven

VI. RELIGION AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

February 21 **A. Buddhism**

Reading: Kieschnick, Introduction and Chapter One

February 23 **B. Symbolism and Merit**
Reading: Keischnick, Chapters Two and Three

Week Eight

February 28 **C. Accidents and Influences of the Monks**
Reading: Finish Kieshnick

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

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

Week Nine

March 6 **B. Words about Things and the Use of Antiques**
Reading: Clunas, Chapters 3 and 4

March 8 **C. Things for Sale and Things as Causes of Anxiety**
Reading: Clunas, Chapters 5 and 6 and Conclusion

Week Ten

March 13 **VIII. MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINESE MOVIES:**
“Raise the Red Lantern”

March 15 Student Presentations, Questions, Odds and Ends
PROJECT OR PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS
Final Exam handed out at end of class

March 20 FINAL EXAM DUE before 6 PM in Prof Cahill’s office, HSS 3040, HIEA file
opposite elevators on the fifth floor of HSS, or classroom TBA

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 (with interpretation)
5. Drama or music
6. Fiction or poetry
7. Fake primary sources such as letters, journals, instructions, relevant fake historical documents of any kind
8. Game/game analysis
9. Literature or film criticism
10. Class presentation or demonstration

Each paper or project, no matter what your subject or format, 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. Academic sources include scholarly books and articles. Wikipedia is not an academic source, although you may use it to lead you to appropriate sources. 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 and require more academic sources. 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