HIEA 128:  HISTORY OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN CHINA

Winter Quarter, 2009

Time:  Tu Th, 12:30 – 1:50
Professor:  Suzanne Cahill
Phone:  (858) 534-8105
E-mail:  secjbm34@aol.com

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
ISBN 0691009570
Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*, Honolulu, University of Hawai‘i, 2004
ISBN: 0-8248-1888

**Recommended text**
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: Leddrose, 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: Keischnick, Chapters Two and Three

Week Eight

February 24  C. Accidents and Monks’ Influence
Reading: Finish Kieshnick

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
    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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynasty</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wei</td>
<td>220-265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shu</td>
<td>221-263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu</td>
<td>222-280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin</td>
<td>265-420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Jin</td>
<td>265-317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Jin</td>
<td>317-420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Dynasties</td>
<td>420-589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOUTHERN</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu Song</td>
<td>420-479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Qi</td>
<td>470-502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Liang</td>
<td>502-557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Chen</td>
<td>557-589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NORTHERN</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Wei</td>
<td>386-534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Wei</td>
<td>534-550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Wei</td>
<td>535-577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Qi</td>
<td>550-577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Zhou</td>
<td>557-581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui</td>
<td>581-618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tang</td>
<td>618-907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhou</td>
<td>690-705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Dynasties</td>
<td>907-960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liao</td>
<td>916-1125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
<td>960-1279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Song</td>
<td>960-1126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Song</td>
<td>1127-1279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin (Jurchen)</td>
<td>1115-1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan (Mongols)</td>
<td>1260-1368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming</td>
<td>1368-1644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing</td>
<td>1644-1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic (Taiwan)</td>
<td>1911-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Republic</td>
<td>1949-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
