

Chinese aesthetics

22-FLFA-ECH

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Faculty of Philosophy

winter semester, 2023, 2024, 30 hrs, 3 ECTS

Wednesdays, 6:45-6:15 p.m., Room 215

Course objectives:

- familiarization with the main development directions of Chinese aesthetics, from its origins to Chinese Marxism
- discussion of the relationships between the categories of Chinese aesthetics and the art of East Asia in the context of its ongoing globalization
- expanding the concept of intertextuality on the example of Chinese conceptualizations of the relationship between the imagery, musicality and literary nature of art
- presenting the methodology of interdisciplinary research in the field of comparative artistic and aesthetic ideas and their impact on the cooperation of the disciplines: philosophy, art history and cultural and religious sciences
- discussion on the ethnocentric limitations of the dominant conceptual apparatus in the field of aesthetics and art theory
- expanding intercultural communication competences in terms of aesthetic sensitivity and in-depth reception of works of art from East Asia

Assessment

Students are evaluated based on active participation in course (20%) and an essay in which they interpret a selected piece of the Western work of art (movie, etc.) through the prism of a chosen Chinese aesthetic theory or a combination of concepts.

Schedule

I. Classical Confucian aesthetics

Week 1. Confucian aesthetics of rituals

the ideal of the six arts * the pedagogical function of rituals * the performativity of tradition * religious rites

Week 2. Confucian aesthetics of music

the aesthetics of the *Book of Songs* * Confucius * Xunzi * and *Records on Music*

II. Classic Daoist aesthetics

Week 3. Classical Daoist aesthetics of music and sculpture

beauty in the axiology of Daoism * aesthetics of sculpture * Laozi and Zhuangzi on music

Week 4. Neo-Daoist philosophy of music

Ruan Ji's aesthetics * Xi Kang's philosophy of music * Debate on the existence of musical emotions

III. Chinese philosophy of literature and historiography

Week 5 and 6. Medieval Chinese philosophy of literature

conceptual apparatus of Chinese philosophy of literature * Lu Ji's philosophy of art and creative process * Liu Xie's aesthetics of literature * Liu Zhiji's aesthetics of historiography * Neo-Confucian philosophy of poetry * Zhu Xi's aesthetics * Li Zhi's philosophy of art

IV. Chinese philosophy of painting

Week 7 and 8. Medieval Chinese philosophy of painting

Gu Kaizhi * Zong Bing's spiritual realism * The problem of the universe and principles of painting * The problem of the unity and truth of the image: Zhang Yanyuan and Jing Hao * Guo Xi: the mood of painting

Week 9 and 10. Chinese philosophy of painting of the northern and southern schools

Northern and southern school of Chinese painting * the meaning of painting * aesthetics of calligraphy * the concept of the image and ‘no-method’ in Shitao * Shen Zhongqian’s theory

V. Chinese theory of architecture and gardening

Week 11. Chinese philosophy of architecture and gardens

cosmo-political idea of division * limitations of Chinese architectural theory * aesthetics of interiors, gardens, and public space

VI. Contemporary Chinese aesthetics

Week 12 and 13. Contemporary Chinese idealistic aesthetics

The concept of aesthetic domain (*jingjie*) * Neo-Kantian aesthetics of Wang Guowei * aesthetics of Cai Yuanpei * 20th-century Taiwanese aesthetics

Week 14 and 15. Sino-Marxist aesthetics

Lu Xun * the beginnings of Marxist aesthetics in China * Maoist philosophy of art * aesthetics of Marxist humanism * post-Marxist aesthetics of Li Zehou

Literature

1. Paul R. Goldin, *The Worlds of Classical Chinese Aesthetics*, Routledge, London 2024.
2. *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Chinese Aesthetic and Philosophy of Art*, ed. Marcello Ghilardi and Hans-George Moeller, Bloomsbury, London 2001.
3. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, ed. Stephen Owen, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1992.
4. *Chinese Aesthetics: Ordering of Literature, the Arts, and the Universe in the Six Dynasties*, edited by Zong-qi Cai, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2004.
5. Li Zehou, *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2010.
6. Xia Kejun, *Chinese Philosophy and Contemporary Aesthetics. Unthought of Empty*, Peter Lang, New York 2020.

Additionally, source texts from Chinese translated for the needs of classes.