

# Origin Of Clothes Exhibition In Hong Kong Explains Barkcloth Origin

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<http://www.asianscientist.com/topnews/origin-of-clothes-exhibition-hong-kong-barkcloth/>

*AsianScientist* (Aug. 5, 2011) - A general science exhibition about the world's search for the origins of barkcloth clothes will open today at the Art Museum on the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) campus.

This exhibition will showcase valuable artefacts of barkcloth stone beaters from Hong Kong, mainland China, and Taiwan.

The '*Origins of Clothes – Barkcloth*' exhibition is co-organized by the Center for Chinese Archaeology and Art at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), Guangdong Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics, and Archaeology and Art Exhibitions China. The opening ceremony was held yesterday on August 4.

Barkcloth is a versatile material used in home furnishings, such as curtains and upholstery. Its name is derived from its rough surface like that of tree bark, and the fabric was once common in Asia, Africa, Indonesia, and the Pacific.

The material comes primarily from trees of the *Moraceae* family, including *Broussonetia papyrifera*, *Artocarpus altilis*, and *Ficus*. To make the fabric, barkcloth stone beaters hammer sodden strips of the fibrous inner bark of these trees into sheets, which are then finished into a variety of items.

Academics recently pointed out that the global barkcloth culture might have originated from South China, especially the area from Yunnan to Lingnan, and that many ancient texts that mention "paper" clothing are actually referring to barkcloth.

The world's oldest barkcloth clothes making tools, radiocarbon dated to around 7,000 years ago, were unearthed in Hong Kong and the Pearl River estuary such as Shenzhen and Zhuhai.

## **Additional details are:**

Public is welcome, and admission is free.

Exhibition Period: 5.8.2011 – 4.1.2012 (closed on 24 & 31 December 2011 and public holidays)

Exhibition Venue: Gallery III & IV, East Wing, Art Museum, CUHK

Opening hours: Mon to Sun, 10 am to 5 pm.

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Source: [The Chinese University of Hong Kong](http://www.asianscientist.com/topnews/origin-of-clothes-exhibition-hong-kong-barkcloth/).

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