

Fall 2020

01:165:242

Classical Chinese Popular Fiction and Drama in Translation

Tuesday/Thursday 2:50–4:10 pm

Instructor: Peng Liu

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Course Description and Goal

In this course, students will read English translations of seminal works of premodern Chinese fiction and drama. These writings illustrate people's everyday life in imperial times; they are also concerned with warfare, rebellion, and the supernatural realm. The class will focus on the following themes: love and desire, commercial life, dynastic crisis, ghosts and animals, as well as gods and demons. While focusing on close readings of the primary sources, we will connect the subject matter to larger topics, such as gender and sex, economy, politics, and religion. All readings are in English. No knowledge of Chinese language or literature is required. Students with the ability to read Chinese texts are encouraged to read the original. **This course is certified for AHp (Arts and Literatures) and aims to train students how to analyze literary texts. It will be conducted via Zoom in the synchronous mode. Students with any technological problems should talk to your instructor.**

Requirements and Grades:

1. Attendance – 10 %
2. Presentation – 20%
3. Canvas postings – 20%
4. Midterm paper (6 pages) – 20%
5. Final paper (6 pages) – 30%

Presentation: During each online meeting, one student should give a presentation. The presenter should summarize and compare the readings, raise questions based on his or her understanding of the texts, as well as answer questions from the instructor and other students. The presentation should last about 10-15 minutes.

Canvas postings: Each student should write one or two paragraphs that reflect your own understanding of the readings. **Please post your postings before 6 PM on the day before class.**

Midterm Paper: Each student should write a well-crafted and clearly argued midterm essay based on the text(s) you choose. It should present a clear argument and demonstrate your skill of close reading. You may engage relevant theoretical works if you think they are helpful to your analysis. The essay will be due at the beginning of class on the due date. It should include footnotes and a bibliography according to the *MLA Style Manual* or *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Final paper: Students should write a term paper with a clear argument. Please combine primary and secondary sources and dissect texts thoroughly. You should include footnotes and a bibliography according to the *MLA Style Manual* or *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please submit an electronic copy via e-mail.

Statement on Academic Integrity

As a member of Rutgers community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors. Your paper should be your own original work. If you want to use words or ideas from other sources, make sure you identified the original sources and provide footnotes or parentheses. If you cite from a published source or from a web site and the quotation is short, please place it in quotation marks; if you quote a longer passage from a publication or web site, please indent it and use single spacing. Any work that has been submitted for credit in another course is generally not allowed to be submitted in this course unless you have the permission from your instructor.

Instructor's Contact Information:

E-mail: peng.liu@rutgers.edu

Online office hours (Zoom): Friday 9-10 pm (Eastern Standard Time); Saturday 1-2 pm (EST)

Required Texts:

All readings can be found on Canvas.

Schedule

Week 1

9/1 Introduction to the course

9/3 Feng Menglong's Work (I)

Primary reading:

Feng Menglong, "Jiang Xingge Reencounters His Pearl Shirt," in *Stories Old and New: A Ming Dynasty Collection*, translated by Shuhui Yang and Yunqin Yang, University of Washington Press, 2000, 9–47.

Secondary reading:

Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, Harvard University Press, 1981, 75–97.

Week 2

9/8 Feng Menglong's Work (II)

Primary reading:

Feng Menglong, "Ruan San Redeems His Debt in Leisurely Clouds Nunnery," in *Stories Old and New*, 94–110.

Secondary reading:

Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, Harvard University Press, 1981, 98–119.

9/10 Feng Monglong (III)

Primary readings:

Feng Menglong, “Qian Poliu Begins His Career in Lin’an,” in *Stories Old and New*, 349–82.

Week 3

9/15 Ling Mengchu’s Work (I)

Primary reading:

Ling Mengchu, “The Man Whose Luck Has Turned Chances Upon Dongting Tangerines; The Merchant from Persia Reveals the Secrets of a Turtle Shell,” in *Slapping the Table in Amazement: A Ming Dynasty Story Collection*, translated by Shuhui Yang and Yunqin Yang, University of Washington Press, 2018, 9–36.

Secondary reading:

Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, Harvard University Press, 1981, 140–64.

9/17 Ling Mengchu’s Work (II)

Primary reading:

Ling Mengchu, “Mr. Zhao Spoils His Son and Dies as a Result; Magistrate Zhang Sentences an Unfilial Son to Death in an Ironclad Case,” in *Slapping the Table in Amazement*, 259–76.

Secondary reading:

Robert E. Hegel, “Introduction” to *Slapping the Table in Amazement*, XI–XVIII.

Week 4

9/22 Ling Mengchu (III)

Primary reading:

Ling Mengchu, “Prayer Services Are Held at West Hill Temple for a Departed Soul; A Coffin Is Prepared in the Kaifeng Yamen for a Living Criminal,” in *Slapping the Table in Amazement*, 329–68.

9/24 Ling Mengchu (IV)

Primary reading:

Ling Mengchu, “An Alchemist Turns Half a Grain of Millet into a Nine-Cycle Pill; A Rich Man Squanders Thousands of Taels of Silver to Win a Beauty’s Smile,” in *Slapping the Table in Amazement*, 369–90.

Week 5

9/29 Tang Xianzu’s Play (I)

Primary reading:

The Peony Pavilion, Scenes 1–10

Secondary reading:

“Peony Pavilion and the cult of love,” *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, Vol. 2, 138–43.

10/1 Tang Xianzu’s Play (II)

Primary reading:

The Peony Pavilion, Scenes 11–20

Secondary reading:

Sophie Volpp, *Worldly Stage: Theatricality in Seventeenth-Century China*, Harvard University Press, 2011, Chapter 1, 27–58

Week 6

10/6 **Tang Xianzu's Play (III)**

Primary reading:

The Peony Pavilion, Scenes 21–30

Secondary reading:

Sophie Volpp, *Worldly Stage*, Chapter 3, 89–128.

10/8 **Tang Xianzu's Play (IV)**

Primary reading:

The Peony Pavilion, Scenes 31–40

Secondary reading:

Sophie Volpp, *Worldly Stage*, Chapter 3, 59–88.

Week 7

10/13 **Tang Xianzu's Play (V)**

Primary reading:

The Peony Pavilion, Scenes 41–55

Secondary reading:

Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China*, Stanford University Press, 1994, Chapter 2.

10/15 No class meeting, preparing for midterm paper

Midterm paper due 10/20

Week 8

10/20 **The Great Ming Novel: *Journey to the West* (I)**

Primary reading:

Journey to the West, Chapter 7, 188–200.

Secondary source:

Watch Stephen Chow's movie before class: *Journey to the West: Conquering the Demons*

10/22 **The Great Ming Novel: *Journey to the West* (II)**

Primary reading:

Journey to the West, Chapter 27

Secondary source: Watch *The Monkey King 2* before class

Week 9

10/27 **The Great Ming Novel: *Journey to the West* (III)**

Primary reading:

Journey to the West, Chapters 36–37

Secondary reading:

Hongmei Sun, *Transforming Monkey: Adaptation and Representation of a Chinese Epic*, University of Washington Press, 2018, Chapter 4, 91–118.

10/29 **The Great Ming Novel: *Journey to the West* (IV)**

Journey to the West, Chapters 38–40

Week 10

11/3 **Li Yu's Stories (I)**

Primary reading:

Li Yu, "A Tower for the Summer Heat"

Secondary reading:

Patrick Hanan, *The Chinese Vernacular Story*, Harvard University Press, 1981, 165–90.

11/5 **Li Yu's Stories (II)**

Li Yu, "Return-to-Right Hall"

Week 11

11/10 **Li Yu's Stories (III)**

Li Yu, "House of Gathered Refinements"

11/12 **Li Yu's Stories (IV)**

Li Yu, "The Cloud-Scraper"

Week 12

11/17 **Li Yu's Stories (V)**

Li Yu, "Homing Crane Lodge"

11/19 **Li Yu's Stories (VI)**

Li Yu, "Nativity Room"

Week 13

Thanksgiving

Week 14

12/1 Student presenting final paper project, group 1

12/3 Student presenting final paper project, group 2

Week 15

12/8 Student presenting final paper project, group 3

12/10 Student presenting final paper project, group 4

Final paper due 12/20