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LS 395.03: Traditional Chinese Literature in English Translation

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FLLG 395.03/Chin 395.03/LS 395.03
Spring, 2002

TRADITIONAL CHINESE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Instructor: T.R. Bradstock, Associate Professor of Chinese
LA 319 Email: tbrad@selway.umt.edu 243-2602
Office Hours: 8-9 daily; 12-2 Tue & Thu and by appt.

For the purposes of this course we interpret the word “literature” in its broadest sense, ranging from historical writings and canonical texts of an almost biblical nature through to works primarily written to entertain, some verging on the low-brow and slightly disreputable. In other words, both the high-culture and low-culture dimensions of China’s literary heritage find their place among our readings. The time-frame we “cover” in this course is a long one, spanning some three thousand years. Since the course is only one semester long, there will only be time to read a limited selection of important but representative works. My hope is that the experience will open your eyes and encourage you to continue exploring Chinese literature well beyond the end of this semester. You may decide to take my next Chinese literature course, on twentieth-century Chinese fiction, which will be offered next spring.

Reading the literature of another country is an excellent way of deepening one’s understanding of its culture and society. Besides providing an introduction to Chinese literature, this course will also further your knowledge about pre-modern and contemporary China, which will be especially helpful to those of you with career plans that involve living and working in China. The Chinese people, even today, are immensely proud of their literary heritage and very familiar with it. Your own familiarity will be beneficial in developing a rapport with Chinese friends and acquaintances.

The course readings have been carefully selected on the basis of their importance within the Chinese literary tradition *and* their relative accessibility to the Western reader. You may have never read any Chinese literature before, nor taken any courses on China, but that should not be an obstacle to understanding and responding to what you have read. In general, the individual selections are not long, but I will expect you to have read them *thoroughly* and thought about what you have read. Make notes as you go along. Jot down ideas as they occur to you. Otherwise, you will forget much of what has been covered and find yourself in a disadvantaged position when finals roll around.

There will be plenty of scope for discussion in this course. Although I will introduce each literary selection and do a fair amount of the talking I will expect each of you to participate and contribute, asking and answering questions and offering comments and observations as we proceed. Don’t hang back out of shyness or diffidence, or imagine that you can simply retreat to the back of the room and go unnoticed for the next fifteen weeks. Make no mistake about it: I am interested in hearing what you have to say and so are your classmates. The success of this course will in part hinge upon everyone becoming actively involved.

Requirements: General

1. You are expected to attend all classes, and attendance is taken each time. Anyone absent four times will automatically fail the course. Lateness without an accepted excuse may result in such instances being counted as absences.
2. Come to class well prepared, having thoroughly read and made notes on the assigned readings for the day.
3. Participate actively in class discussions.
4. Turn in all written assignments on time. Your instructor reserves the right to refuse to accept late papers.

Written Assignments:

Four papers, each 4-5 pages long, typed and double-spaced, will be assigned during the semester. There will be a final exam covering the entire semester's work, but no mid-term.

Grading:

Your overall course grade will be determined as follows-

1. Papers: 4 x10% each = 40%
2. Final Exam: 40% (This will be held *Thursday, May 16, 10:10-12:00*)
3. Class Participation: 20% This includes performance in discussions and demonstrated level of preparedness during class time.

COURSE READINGS

1. **FACPAC (Referred to hereafter as FP) - available from UC Bookstore**
2. ***Anthology of Chinese Literature*, by Cyril Birch - purchase at UCB**
3. **Readings on reserve at the Mansfield Library**
4. **Possible extra items which will be given out in class.**

Assigned Readings and Their Sources:

A. PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY

- ***The Confucian Canon: Selections from The Five Classics FP: 1-5**
- * **Lun Yu (The Confucian Analects) FP: 14-23**
- * **Daoism: Selections from Tao Te Ching (Lao Tzu) FP: 6-13**
- * **Daoism: Selections from Chuang Tzu FP: 24-38**
(Discussion on Making All Things Equal; In The World of Men)
plus Chia Yi's poem *The Owl*, Birch 138-140
- * **Legalism: readings TBA**

***Ssu-ma Ch'ien's Historical Biographies:**

- The Marquis of Huai-yin (Han Hsin) FP: 39-51**
- The Biography of Ching K'o (Birch 106-118)**

B. POETRY

- *The Book of Odes (a.k.a. The Classic of Odes") FP: 52-55**

- *Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju: The Shang-lin Park Birch 142-153**

- *Han dynasty and Three Kingdoms Period War Poems FP: 93-102**

- *The Nineteen Old-Style Poems FP: 89-92**

- *T'ao Yuan-ming (T'ao Ch'ien) FP: 75-85, Birch 182-188**

- *Juan Chi (Ruan Ji) FP: 56-57**

- *Pao Chao Birch 189-193**

- *Li Po (Li Bo/Bai) FP: 58-59**

- *Tu Fu FP: 60-62, 86-88**

- *Po Chu-yi Birch 266-69, plus possible extras**

- *Tz'u Poetry: Wen T'ing-yun, Wei Chuang, and Li Yu Birch, 336 et. seq**

- *Mei Yaochen and other major Sung dynasty poets FP: 64-68**

(Prose Essays of Han Yu: Bone of Buddha; The Crocodile Birch 250-255)

C. SHORT STORIES

- The Story of Ts'ui Ying-ying (Birch, 290-313)**
- Miss Jen (Reserve)**
- Nieh Hsiao-ch'ien + Red Jade (Reserve)**
- The Foxes' Revenge + Fifteen Strings of Cash (Reserve)**
- The Case of the Dead Infant + The Swindler Alchemists (Reserve)**

D. NOVELS: Excerpts from the following works:

- Ru Lin Wai Shi* (The Scholars), by Wu Ching-tzu FP: 69-74**
- Hong Lou Meng* (A Dream of Red Mansions) FP: 103 to end**
- Shui Hu Zhuan* (Outlaws of the Marsh) (Reserve (If time allows))**
- San Guo Yan-yi* (Romance of the Three Kingdoms) (Reserve)**

Additions to and subtractions from the list above may be made at the instructor's discretion.