

YHU 3211

Chinese Tales of the Strange 志怪小說

Semester 2, AY 2019-20

Instructor: Scott Cook 顧史考

Course Info	Mondays and Thursdays 1:00–2:30, in Classroom 22 Prerequisite: Introduction to Classical Chinese or equivalent background
Instructor Info	Office Hours at Saga RC1-01-03C (6601-3584; scott.cook@yale-nus.edu.sg): Mondays and Thursdays 4:30–5:30, and by appointment
Description	This class will examine the Chinese literary genre of “Tales of the Strange” from its earliest beginnings all the way to its later instantiations in late-imperial times. All the primary readings will be in the original classical Chinese, and these will be supplemented by secondary readings in both English and Chinese.
Goals	Our goals will be to acquire in-depth knowledge of this important and enduring genre of Chinese literature at the same time that we further develop and refine skills in reading texts written in Classical Chinese. We aim to gain an appreciation of the historical origins and development of this genre and undertake analyses of the literary conventions and devices employed in its most representative works. We will also sharpen our writing skills by crafting our own short stories in classical Chinese.
Reading Materials	Selections from Li Jianguo 李劍國, <i>Tangqian zhiguai xiaoshuo jishi (xiudingben)</i> 《唐前志怪小說輯釋（修訂本）》 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2011). Other primary and secondary readings as arranged by instructor.
Assignments	1) Daily reading preparation Advanced preparation of the classical stories to be read and discussed in each class 2) Secondary article review Informal oral presentation to the rest of the class summarizing the content and arguments of an assigned Chinese secondary-source article 3) Creative writing in classical Chinese Write your own strange tale in classical Chinese, with an eye to imitating the literary conventions of the genre. To be submitted in two drafts. 4) Final research/translation assignment An 8-12–page paper featuring an annotated translation of a <i>zhiguai</i> story, along with historical background information and a brief analysis of the story. Also to be submitted in two drafts.

Schedule January 20, January 27, February 3, February 10, February 17, February 20:
 Secondary article review presentations (one student each date)
 February 20 (Thursday): First draft of creative writing due
 March 19 (Thursday): Final draft of creative writing due
 April 9 (Thursday): First draft of translation project due
 April 20 (Monday): Final draft of translation project due

Grading and Policies Class attendance in class is mandatory. Except in emergency situations or where prior approval is granted, you will be considered absent even in the case of routine sickness and other such events—though up to two days of absence will be allowed in the latter cases provided you make up all required readings and assignments prior to the next class. Every absence over two will result in the loss of one-third of a letter grade in your final grade (e.g., an A- with four absences would change to a B). If you arrive late for class three times, this will also count as an absence.

Grading breakdown:

Participation and preparation	30%
Secondary article review	10%
Creative writing assignment	30%
Final translation project	30%
Total	100%

First assignment for Thursday:

Read: 〈晉治氏女徒〉(from《汲冢瑣語》) and 〈精衛〉(from《山海經》) in《唐前志怪小說輯釋(修訂本)》, pp. 2-3 and 6-8. Focus on the main text, but try to read as much of the notes as you can (you can skip the parallel citations on pp. 8-9). If (*and only if*) you still have more time, read 〈穿窬國〉from《括地圖》, pp. 32-34.

Read: DeWoskin, Kenneth. J. "The Six Dynasties *Chih-Kuai* and the Birth of Fiction." In Andrew H. Plaks, ed., *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 21-52. (Access by "Files" tab in CANVAS)

Secondary articles for student review:

William H. Nienhauser, Jr., "The Origins of Chinese Fiction"
 Anthony C. Yu, "'Rest, Rest, Perturbed Spirit!' Ghosts in Traditional Chinese Prose Fiction"
 Robert Campany, "Ghosts Matter: The Culture of Ghosts in Six Dynasties Zhiguai"
 Poo Mu-chou, "Ghost Literature: Exorcistic Ritual Texts or Daily Entertainment?"
 Alan L. Miller, "The Woman Who Married a Horse: Five Ways of Looking at a Chinese Folktale"
 李學勤, 〈放馬灘簡中的志怪故事〉