HMMA 5300 Topics in Premodern Chinese Literature and Culture

Instructor: Huan Jin
Class Time: Tuesday 9:00 a.m.–11:50 a.m.

Course description:

Through classical works and canonical authors, this course introduces to the students important concepts and knowledge in premodern Chinese literature and culture. Some topics explored in this course include authorship, narrative theory, manuscript culture, material culture, and book history.

Language of instruction: Chinese

Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation (30%)
   You are expected to attend lectures and tutorial presentations. Please join the lectures via the “Zoom” tab in Canvas at least 5 minutes prior to start time. Join with cameras on and muted microphones. Please be mindful about where you are focusing your attention. There will be “cold calls”.
   Starting from WEEK 3, you are also expected to respond to one of the prompts for the next lecture by 7 p.m. every Sunday (the first response is due on February 19). Please do so by replying to the thread of the week in the “Discussion” forum on Canvas. The posting should be around 200-250 words, with a focus on the text/issues under discussion for the relevant week. Class participation will be calculated and counted towards the final grade.

2. Tutorial presentation (30%)
   Students will form groups of 5-6 people to present on one or two texts from one of the story collections we examine in this class. The topic needs to fall under one of our weekly themes. You may find your group in "People_Tutorial Presentation Group" on Canvas. Collaboration among group members is important. The audience should be prepared to comment on the tutorial presentation. Make sure to submit the powerpoint of your presentation, if you use any, by 7 p.m. of the Sunday before the week of your presentation.

3. Final paper (40%)
   - Write a research paper of 12–15 pages (including bibliography) on a topic of your choice. The topic should fall under one of the weekly themes, and must NOT have overlap with your tutorial presentation. Choose TWO/THREE pieces of writing from ONE/TWO story collections covered in class, and engage with at least three scholarly articles/chapters already available on your topic.
   - For paper format, please consult: https://www.litphil.sinica.edu.tw/public/6-5-format.pdf
   - Final Paper Topic and 200-Word Abstract Due 4/1 (Saturday) @ 8 p.m.
   - Final Paper Outline Due, 4/15 (Saturday) @ 8pm (In the following week sign up for Office hours for feedback)
   - Final Paper Due May 15 (Monday) @ NOON
Late papers will be penalized with one grade-step deduction for each day it is late (i.e., an “A” paper will become an “A-” after one day, a “B+” after two, and so on) barring demonstrated, exceptional circumstances.

Academic Integrity: No plagiarism in ANY assignment, including responses, is tolerated in this class. A guide for good reference skills can be found via this link: https://libguides.hkust.edu.hk/referencing. Please consult HKUST’s code on academic integrity by following this link: https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/resource-library/academic-integrity.

Readings: All reading materials could be found on the course website

Course Learning Outcomes:

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<td>1</td>
<td>Have a knowledge of canonical authors and their works in premodern China</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Describe important concepts and trends in premodern Chinese literary and cultural history</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Approach premodern Chinese texts through theoretical and analytical tools</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Support arguments with textual evidence</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Engage with domestic and international scholarly discussions in the study of premodern Chinese literature and culture</td>
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Grading:
Attendance, participation, and weekly response 30%
Tutorial presentation, 30%
Final paper/creative project, 40%

** This syllabus is subject to changes.

Weekly Schedule:

Feb 7 WEEK 1 Introduction
Selected writings from The Chronicle of Zuo 左傳, Zhuangzi 莊子, and Record of the Grand Historian 史記

Feb 14 WEEK 2 Narrative Perspectives

Secondary Reading:
- Stephen Owen, “Conflicting Interpretations: ‘Yingying’s Story’” in The End of the Chinese “Middle Ages”

Feb 21 WEEK 3 Woodblock Printing and Commercial Culture
Ling Mengchu 凌濛初 (1580–1644), “An Alchemist Turns Half a Grain of Millet into a Nine-Cycle Pill; A Rich Man Squanders Thousands of Tales of Silver to Win a Beauty’s Smile” 丹客半黍九還 富翁千金一笑, “The Man Whose Luck Has Turned Chances upon Donting Tangerine; the Merchant from Persia Reveals the Secrete of a Turtle Shell” 轉運漢巧遇洞庭紅，波斯胡指破龜龍殼; Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574–1646), “Shi Fu Encounters a Friend at Tanque” 施潤澤灘闕遇友

Secondary Reading:

Feb 28 WEEK 4 Vernacular Storytelling
“Du Zichun” 杜子春 from Taiping guangji 太平廣記, Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574–1646), “Du Zichun Goes to Chang’an Three Times” 杜子春三入長安; “Du Tenth Sinks the Jewelry Box in Anger” 杜十娘怒沈百寶箱; “For One Penny, a Small Grudge Ends in Stark Tragedies” 一文錢小隙造奇冤

Secondary Reading:

Mar 7 WEEK 5 Authorship and Craftsmanship

Secondary Reading:

Mar 14 WEEK 6 Drama and Fiction
Li Yu 李漁 (1611–1680), “Tan Chuyu Declares His Love in a Play; Liu Miaogu Dies for Honor’s Sake After Her Aria” 譚楚玉戲里傳情 劉藐姑曲終死節; “An Ugly Husband Fears a Pretty Wife but Marries a Beautiful One” 丑郎君怕嬌偏得豔; selected scenes from Errors Caused by the Kite 風箏誤
Secondary Reading:

Mar 21 WEEK 7 Trauma and Dynastic Transition

Secondary Reading:
- Tina Lu, “Fictional Reunions in the Wake of Dynastic Fall,” in Idema, Wilt L., Wai-Yee Li, and Ellen Widmer ed., Trauma and Transcendence In Early Qing Literature. Harvard University Asia Center, 2006.

Mar 28 WEEK 8 Illusions and Transgressions
Pu Songling 蒲松齡 (1640–1715), “Painted Wall” 畫壁, “Nie Xiaqian” 聶小倩, “Painted Skin” 畫皮

Secondary Reading:

Final Paper Topic and 200-Word Abstract Due 4/1 (Saturday) @ 8 p.m.

Apr 4 WEEK 9 The World of Qing

Secondary Reading:

Apr 11 Midterm Break

Final Paper Outline Due, 4/15 (Saturday) @ 8pm

Apr 18 WEEK 10 Knowledge and Strangeness

Secondary Reading:

Apr 25 WEEK 11 (A)Moral Solutions

Secondary Reading:

May 2 WEEK 12 Tutorial Presentation

May 9 WEEK 13 Tutorial Presentation

Final Paper Due May 15 (Monday) @ NOON