

CHIN 380/LS 311

Chinese Folktales Fall Semester 2019

Instructor: Dr. Zhen Cao
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Office Hours: M.W.F. 11am – noon
TU, THUR 1pm to 2pm

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Text Books:

1. Tang Dynasty Stories
2. Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio
3. Favorite Folktales of China (John Minford)
4. Folk Tales of China (Wolfram Eberhard)

Class Meetings: M.W.F. 2:00pm to 2:50pm

Classroom: L.A. 140

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to have the students taste Chinese folktales of different times, from different cultural sources (nationalities/ethnic groups) and of a variety of themes. Upon completion of this course, students will have some authentic knowledge and true understanding, however little, of the Chinese cultures and civilization.

Students Learning Outcomes:

1. Through reading a variety of Chinese folk tales, students will learn the Chinese version of creation, the basics of the three religions: Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism.
2. Students will learn and understand the philosophy and values of the Taoist Natural Way and the Confucian Social Way that have been guiding the life of the people.
3. Students are able to identify and evaluate the social significance and cultural implications of the Chinese mythology.
4. Students are able to express critically their own views and opinions on the humanistic values of the Chinese folklores.

Grading: Straight 100 point method will be used for this course. 100 points are allocated as follows:

Tests: 20 X 2 = 40

10 quizzes 2 X 10 = 20

(provinces, neighboring countries, ethnic groups,

dynasties, and traditional holidays)	
two-page paper	10
(on The Confucian Social Way or the Taoist Natural Way)	
Class presentation	15
Final paper/project	15

A 93 – 100; A- 90-92;

B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82;

C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72

D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D- 60-62

F 59 and under

Attendance and make-up tests policy:

During the whole semester a total of three absences (excused or unexcused) are allowed without penalty. Thereafter, two points deduction is applied each occurrence to the final grade. No make-up test will be arranged except for emergency cases.

Further Important Information:

1. This course uses pluses and minuses in its grading. The lowest credit-receiving grade is D minus, the highest possible course grade a straight A, not A+.
2. Note that you need to select the traditional grading option if you are planning to have this course count toward fulfillment of the Chinese Minor and/or General Education requirements.
3. Auditors: Anyone auditing the class must formally enroll as an auditor.
4. Anyone with a learning or medical disability and in need of special arrangements must inform us of this fact at the beginning of the course. People with such disabilities must provide documentary proof of their status.

Tentative Schedule

Week of Monday Aug. 26h.

Monday: Goals, plans and requirements of the course

Wen: definition on folk tales: forms, themes, purposes, authorship, survivability and etc.

Fri: Chinese legends on creation:

Pagu story of Creation of the world vs. the Christian version

Video Clip

Huaxi Shi, Fuxi and Nvwa

Fuxi

Nvwa

Nvwa story of creation of human beings

Video clip

Nvwa mending the sky vs. the Deluge

Video Clip

Week of Tuesday Sept. 3rd, t

Mon: creation legends continues, and Chinese zodiacs

Wen: Chinese zodiacs continues, Taoist 3 worlds, Upper, Middle and Under

Video Clip: 1 st episode of Weaving Girl & Cowboy (5 min)

Chinese zodiac: 12 year circle

Chinese zodiac 12 time periods

Chinese zodiac: 12 months of agriculture calendar

Fri: preparation of Quiz One: Chinese provinces (handout)

Chinese New Year

Video Clip 1. Story of Nian (a-standard) (b-friendly version)

Video Clip 2. Chinese New Year Family Tradition

Video Clip 3: Butter-fly Dance and the Liang-zhu Folk Tale

Week of Monday Sept. 9th,

Book of Songs (Odes): 3 story handout: "Gwan, Gwan" (video clip), "Climb that Barren Ridge", "Big Rat..", "She Who First Bore Our People"

Tang Dynasty videos: 1. Da-Ming Palace; 2. Tang Dynasty History

Discussion on Tang Dynasty: history, politics, population, religions (naturalization of Buddhism...), music, art and literature, Princess Wen-cheng and Tibet, Wu Zhetian the Emperress, the Silk Road

Tang Dynasty Stories “White Monkey”

Friday: Quiz One (provinces),

study of Quiz Two: neighboring countries

Week of Monday Sept. 16th,

Monday: “Ren, the Fox Fairy”

Wednesday day: Introduction of Confucianism and its “Multi-Social Role Model”

Handout: 3 cardinal rules and 5 relationships; 5 constant virtues;

3 obediences for women and 4 virtues

Friday: Quiz Two (neighboring countries)

Video clips: Chinese New Year Gala: 1. Butter-fly dance/Liao-Zhuo Story

Marriage Traditions

2. Blue Porcelain

Study of Quiz Three: Ethnic Groups (handout), the perennial land-population-food issue, the demographic changes since enforcement of one-child-one-family policy

Week of Monday Sept. 23rd,

Monday: (continued) “Ren, the Fox Fairy”; Taoist concepts of “three worlds”,

Five Elements, Two Energy Forces, transformability, transferability, co-existence, inter-marriage

Wednesday: “Dragon King’s Daughter”: Explain historic incidents, god/spirit/deity in

places beyond human reach

eunuch (void of physical problem and political ambition)

reincarnation vs. short-cut to immortality

five species: feathered, phoenix; furred, unicorn; hard-shelled, tortoise; scaly, dragon; hairless, man

Friday: Quiz Three (Ethnic groups), study of Quiz Four, Dynasties (handout)

“Prince Huo’s Daughter”: marriage tradition revisit: parental arrangement, match-maker system (Ba-gua: birth signs & place, five elements & etc.), love vs. marriage;

cousin-marriage; talent and beauty; wonderful age for girls, age of establishment for man

Civil Service Examination System (Han Dynasty – Qing Dynasty 1905)

Rational:

Workings of the system:

Week of Monday Sept. 30th,

Monday: “Story of Singsong Girl”, discussion in comparison and contrast with “Prince Huo’s Daughter”,

Rewarding Pattern/Model: family/off-springs; Social Rank (recognition), political and social influence; wealth(land, property w/. servants and maids)

Wednesday: “Wu-shuang, the Peerless”--- Chinese “Romeo & Juliet”; cousin-marriage revisited; Eight cousin categories in Chinese culture: Tang type 25%; Biao type 75%; bribery as part of the culture; Taoist alchemists;

Friday: Quiz 4: Chinese Dynasties; Study of Quiz 5: traditional holiday/festivals;

“Governor of Southern Tributary State”; Taoist notions: relativity of space & time; separation of soul and body; Fate;

nepotism; non-fault power-stripping/removal of potential threat/risk

Vanity/worldly power and fame; emptiness of the human world (poem by Robert Frost); Taoist story with Buddhist theme?

Week of Monday Oct. 7th,

Monday: “The Man with the Curly Beard”, “The Prince’s Tomb”,

Fate vs. ambition

Karma revisited

Silk road revisited

Wednesday: “The Kunlun Slave” & “The General’s Daughter”

Chinese version of “Ninja”? Taoist hermits

Serving justice on behalf of the Heaven (vs. street justice)

Material wealth ---- happiness

Beauty—fair complexion

Friday: Quiz 5 Traditional Holidays/Festivals; Study of Quiz 6: ten provinces, their capital cities and two of the neighboring provinces.

“The Spendthrift and the Alchemist”, “Jade Mortar and Pestle”

Taoist way of life: simplicity vs. sophistication, importance in keeping belly full (natural energy) and mind empty (of social vanity and sophistication)

Taoist obsession with immortality elixir (short-cut)

Invention of gun-power as a result of accident

Human emotions: joy, anger, sorrow, fear, hate, desire and the most

vulnerable love

Week of Monday Oct. 14th,

Monday: First Test

Wednesday: Discussion of the First Test

Pu Songling and his *Strange Tales from Make-Do Studio*

Handout of the reading list for the above book

Friday: Quiz 6

Beginning of readings from *Favorite Folktales of China* (John Minford) (Red Book) & *Folk Tales of China* (Wolfram Eberhard) (white Book)

“Examination for the Post of Guardian Angels”

Week of Monday Oct. 21st,

Monday: “The Painted Wall”, “Planting a Pear Tree”, “The Taoist Priest of Laoshan”; 3 stories from the Red Book, 1 story from the White Book

Wednesday: "The Buddhist Priest of Changqing", "Miss Jiaonuo"; 3 stories from Red Book, 1 story from the white book

Friday: Quiz 7; "Magic Arts", 3 stories from Red Book, 1 from White Book

Spring Break

Week of Monday Oct. 28th,

Monday: *The Painted Skin*", 3 stories from Red Book, 1 story from White Book

Wednesday: Traditional Chinese Medicine, its philosophy, generating and controlling relationships among the five elements, Yin and Yang, the two basic energy forces, methods of diagnosis, ways of therapy.

Friday: Quiz 8 "Judge Lu", 3 stories from Red Book, 1 story from White Book

Week of Monday Nov. 4th,

Monday: *Miss Yingning, The tiger of Zhaocheng*, 3 stories from Red Book, 1 story from white book

Wednesday: *The Sisters, The Fighting Cricket*. Fengshui & karma revisited; example of education as a social ladder, separation of body and soul, social injustice. 3 stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book.

Friday: Quiz 9. *A Rip Van Winkle, Bribery and Corruption, Theft of the Peach*. 3 Stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book.

Week of Monday Nov. 11th,

Monday: *Theft of the Peach, Cruelty Avenged*, 3 stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book.

Wednesday: *Fengshui*, 3 stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book.

Friday: Test Two. Two-page paper due: on either of the two topics: The Taoist Natural Way, or The Confucian Social Way.

Week of Monday Nov. 18th,

Monday: Quiz 10 (holidays, festivals with dates and content), sign-up for class presentations, 3 stories from the red book, one story from the white book

Wednesday: class presentation, 3 stories from the red book, one story from the white book.

Friday: class presentation, a historic over-view on Tibet and discussion on “the Tibetan Issues”

Week of Monday Nov. 25th,

Monday: class presentation. Summary of religions in China and discussion on “the Chinese Religion Issues”, relationship between the Chinese government and the Roman Catholic Church (political or religious issues? Issues surrounding the underground churches, demolition and/or alteration of the newly-built giant churches”, Christian population in China.

Week of Monday Dec. 2nd,

Monday: class presentation. 2 stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book.

Wed: Class presentation. 2 stories from the red book, 1 story from the white book

Friday: Class presentation.

Evaluation of the class.

Food for thought: topics and issues after this class.