

INTRODUCTION TO VIETNAMESE LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

---- Proposed Course Syllabus

Course no. 01:098:215
XXXXX

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Course description:

This course introduces traditional Vietnamese literature from its beginnings in the early 2nd millennium to the advent of the French Conquest in the mid-19th century. We begin by examining Vietnamese literature's Chinese foundations, including important Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist texts, as well as the major poetic achievements of the Tang Dynasty (out of which an independent Vietnamese kingdom arose). We then move on to the beginnings of a Vietnamese tradition, paying special attention to the poetic movements of the High Lê period (15th century), and to the importance of Buddhist texts reworked and published at this time. We next treat the 18th century "Golden Age" of vernacular literature, made possible through a redefinition of, and rekindled interest in the vernacular script called Chữ Nôm. We end our course with an examination of 18th and 19th century Nôm masterpieces, including Vietnam's most enduring literary work, *The Tale of Kieu*. Readings will consist of both primary texts in English translations and secondary works focused on historical or critical context. We will pay particular attention to the development of a vernacular (Vietnamese-language) tradition from within an ancient and revered tradition of composing in Literary Sinitic (i.e. "Classical Chinese"). Relevant cultural and historical contexts will be provided in class. No background in either Chinese or Vietnamese language or literature is required. Students with reading ability in either Literary Sinitic or Vietnamese are encouraged to read texts in the original, though all class discussions will be based on the English translations.

Course objectives:

By the end of this course, undergraduate students will demonstrate a strong grasp of the development of literary forms from origins to the French Conquest, with special attention to the symbiotic and evolving relationship between the Vietnamese language and Literary Sinitic. Students will hone their capacity to analyze cultural works as the products of specific social and historical contexts, and will be able to apply these analytic skills to the historical study of a variety of other fields.

Course breakdown:

Attendance & participation: 20%
Classroom presentation: 10%
Short paper: 10%
Weekly reflections: 30%
Term paper: 30%

Attendance and participation:

Attendance is mandatory, and entails the following: 1) physical attendance at all classes; 2) timely completion of all assigned reading; 3) observance of basic classroom decorum (no chatting, texting, eating, gaming, or surfing the internet); and 4) active participation in all classroom discussions. Students are required to bring printed copies of all readings to every class.

You are given 2 excused absences for the semester, with no questions asked. These may be used for any reason, and do not require justification. However, missing a class for health reasons or travel will count as one “excused absence.” Any student who misses more than **FOUR** classes will **automatically fail the course**.

Oral presentations

Each student will be responsible for two (subject to change) in-class presentations, during which the student will lead seminar discussion of the assigned primary texts. Students are expected to summarize important contextual knowledge for the class (from secondary materials or previous sessions), and to lead thoughtful discussion on at least one of the assigned primary texts.

Written Assignments

Weekly reflections: Students are responsible for one 250-300 word reflection on one of the assigned primary reading materials per week. Questions will be provided in advance of the readings, but students should feel free to expand beyond the topics proposed. However, it is not enough simply to express personal opinions or emotional responses to texts. Students are expected to demonstrate that they have read each text thoughtfully and carefully, and to relate each text to other texts, works, themes and concepts encountered in the class. Weekly reflections are due each Tuesday by 10:00am, and submitted via sakai dropbox.

Final term paper (undergraduate): 6-8 pages in length. Chose two primary texts or sets of texts that were produced in separate eras, and compare differences and/or similarities in structure, theme, imagery, or function, (accounting for differences in genre if applicable). Arguments must be clear, original, and supported by textual evidence. Papers should be submitted in either the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) format or *American Psychological Association* (APA) format. Links for help with each citation style are listed below:

CMS: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

APA: <http://www.apastyle.org>

No late papers accepted, without formal (and timely) application for an incomplete.

Final term paper (graduate): 15-18 pages. Library research and both primary and secondary sources are required. Topics to be decided jointly with instructor, and prospectus of proposed topic due at the end of week 8.

Guidelines for submission of written work:

- All work must be word-processed (no handwritten work will be accepted).
- Double-spaced, using 1-inch standard margins.
- Use standard font (e.g. Times New Roman), in 12-point.
- Number your pages.
- Staple** your pages together.
- At the top of the first page include your **name, assignment designation, date, and essay title**.
- Proofread and spellcheck before bringing any drafts to class.

Statement of Academic Integrity & Public Domain:

All student writing for the course, with the exception of the final term paper, may be read and shared by all members of this class. All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Violations of academic integrity, such as cheating, plagiarism, helping others to violate academic integrity, or submitting another's work as your own, will not be tolerated. Any violation will result in zero credit for that assignment and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the rules and conventions of attribution and citation is not considered a mitigating factor. See Rutgers University guidelines on academic integrity at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>.

Course materials:

There are two required textbooks for this course:

Huỳnh Sanh Thông (1996). An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Taylor, Keith (2013). A History of the Vietnamese. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

All other readings listed will be uploaded to *sakai*, in folders designated by date. Necessary bibliographic information will always be provided at the end of each reading.



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A History of Vietnamese Literature

COURSE SCHEDULE[^]

THE CHINESE FOUNDATIONS OF VIETNAMESE LITERATURE			
1	Nation, Language, and Literature		
	9-3	Introduction	-Nothing!
	9-5	The dangers of nationalism	-Benedict Anderson, <i>Imagined Communities</i> 48-59 - <i>Southern Hills & Rivers</i> (Ly Thuong Kiet)
2	Confucius & the Classics		
	9-10	The Five Classics	- <i>Classical Sources of Chinese Tradition, SCT</i> , 24-40
	9-12	The Sage himself	- <i>The Analects of Confucius</i> (selections)
3	Daoism and Buddhism		
	9-17	The nature of reality	- <i>The Zhuangzi</i> (selections)
	9-19	Compassion and a dusty world	- <i>The Lotus Sutra</i> (selections)
THE BEGINNINGS OF A VIETNAMESE TRADITION			
4	Guardians of a Tradition		
	9-23	A Literary Empire	-Taylor (2013), <i>History of the Vietnamese</i> (Chapter 1) <u>Primary reading:</u> -High Tang selections (Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, Li Bai, Du Fu)
	9-25	A Buddhist Kingdom	-Taylor (2013), <i>History of the Vietnamese</i> (Ch. 2-3 selections) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Ly poetry (selections) - <i>Native Practices of our Chan Ancestors</i> (selections)
5	A Southern Kingdom		
	9-30	Permanent exiles in a magical land	-Taylor (2013), <i>History of the Vietnamese</i> (Ch. 4) <u>Primary reading:</u> - <i>Strange Tales of Linh Nam</i> (selections) - <i>Departed Spirits of the Viet Realm</i> (selections)
	10-2	No longer One	-Whitmore (1985), <i>Ho Quy Ly & the Ming</i> (selections) <u>Primary reading:</u> - <i>The Ming Chronicles</i> (selections) - <i>The Complete Chronicles of Dai Viet</i> (selections)
6	The High Le Renaissance		
	10-7	A Sage for the New Kingdom	-Taylor (2013), <i>History of the Vietnamese</i> (Ch. 4 selections) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Nguyen Trai (selections)
	10-9	Le experiments in vernacular poetry	- <i>The Hong Duc Anthology</i> (selections) -Nguyen Binh Khiem (selections)
7	Buddhism & the Vernacular		
	10-14	New accounts of ancient stories	- <i>The Cloud Buddha of Co Chau</i> (Han)
	10-16	The Buddha in the southern land	- <i>The Cloud Buddha of Co Chau</i> (Nom)

[^] Subject to change at instructor's discretion.

THE CHU NOM REVOLUTION			
8	The Idea of Two Languages		
	10-21	The 17 th Century turning point	-Phan (2014), “Rebooting the Vernacular” (pp. 96-111)
	10-23	Augmenting the Cosmopolitan	-Phan (2014), “Rebooting the Vernacular” (111-128) <u>Primary reading:</u> - <i>Explication of the Guide to Jeweled Sounds</i> (prefaces)
9	A Divided Realm		
	10-28	Poetry of the “Outer Realm”	-Taylor (2013), <i>History of the Vietnamese</i> (Chapter 4) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Bui Duong Lich & Pham Quy Thich (selections)
	10-30	Poetry of the “Inner Realm”	-Ang (2012), <i>Statecraft on the Margins</i> (selections) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Poetry of the Mac clan (selections) -Dao Duy Tu (selections)
10	Old Tales, New Tunes		
	11-11	An itch for the vernacular	Thong (1996), <i>Anthology of Vietnamese Poems</i> (intro) -Dang Tran Con, <i>Song of the Soldier’s Wife</i> (Han) -Phan Huy Ich, <i>Song of the Soldier’s Wife</i> (Nom)
	11-13	Singing in a new meter	-Nguyen Gia Thieu, <i>A Song of Sorrow Inside the Royal Harem</i>
11	A Golden Age of Nom Poetry		
	11-4	Classical forms with vernacular content	Phan (2013), “The Flowering of Nom Poetry” (selections) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Nguyen Cong Tru, Cao Ba Quat, Huynh Man Dat (selections)
	11-6	A new master of regulated verse	Balaban, <i>Spring Essence</i> (introduction) <u>Primary reading:</u> -Poetry of Ho Xuan Huong (selections)
A FUSION OF HIGH & LOW			
12	The Domestication of the South		
	11-18	Village voices	-Ca tru selections -Ca dao selections
	11-20	The elevation of the folksong	- <i>Catfish & Toad</i> (Anthology) - <i>The Constant Mouse</i> (Anthology)
13	A Seamless Union		
	11-25	<i>A New Cry from a Broken Heart</i>	Thong (1987), <i>The Tale of Kieu</i> (intro) <u>Primary reading:</u> - <i>The Tale of Kieu</i> (Part I)
	11-27	The Dust of Life	- <i>The Tale of Kieu</i> (Part II)
14	The Reinvention of the Vietnamese Language		
	12-2	Talent and Destiny	- <i>The Tale of Kieu</i> (Part III)
	12-4	A new classical emerges	- <i>The Marvelous Encounter at Blue Creek</i> (Anthology)
15	An Alloyed Tradition		
	12-9	What is Vietnamese Literature?	-Nothing!

16	12-11 12-12	---- READING DAYS ---- READING DAYS ---- READING DAYS ----
●*	12-22	FINAL DRAFT DUE AT 3:59PM - FINAL DRAFT DUE AT 3:59PM - FINAL DRAFT DUE AT 3:59PM

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