

Course Title	: Translating Travel Literature
Course Code	: TRA3244
Recommended Study Year	: 2 to 4
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Elective (Category B)
Prerequisite	: Nil
Co-requisite	: Nil
Exclusion	: Nil
Exemption Requirement	: Nil

Brief Course Description:

Travel writings have occupied a central place in the Western imagination of China. Yet, these travelogues penned by Western visitors to the Middle Kingdom pose huge challenges for modern translators unfamiliar with their historical context. This course not only examines the inherent difficulties of translating travel literature, but also shows how travelogues by Westerners have historically codified the manifold images of China as understood in the West. On a pragmatic note, moreover, many Lingnan undergraduate students may end up working in the travel industry, especially given Hong Kong's unique status as a hub for regional tourism. In the future, students may need to translate hotel brochures, promotional materials for travel agencies, or even guidebooks. As such, this course also prepares them for a promising job market in a post-pandemic world by offering them practical tips on how to write about China in idiomatic English/Chinese prose that is appealing to a broad audience.

Languages of Instruction: English supplemented by Chinese

Aims:

This course helps students improve their close reading abilities in both English and Chinese. It also helps students foster their cross-cultural sensibilities by encouraging them to critically reflecting on the issue of Orientalism and its relevance to the Chinese context.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. translate travel writings about China into idiomatic English/Chinese prose that is appealing to a broad audience
2. contextualize the source text through additional online as well as archival research
3. critically reflect on issues of Orientalism

Indicative Content:

1. translation techniques such as addition, omission, abridgement, emendation, tweaking, and reshuffling of words
2. difficulties of translating travel literature owing to outdated place names, non-Sinitic words, and non-standardized transliterations tossed in by Western travelers in their writings
3. the biases in Western depictions of Eastern stereotypes (also known as "Orientalism")
4. the manifold images of China—whether romanticized, aestheticized, or demonized—under the pen of Westerner travelers

Teaching Method:

This course comprises both lectures and tutorials. Lectures will introduce students to broader theoretical concepts while tutorials will allow students to analyze more specific textual issues.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome	In-class Translation Exercises (20%)	Translation Assignment (50%)	Term Paper (30%)
1. students will be able to translate traveling writings about China into idiomatic English/Chinese prose that is appealing to a broad audience	X	X	
2. students will be able to put the source text in context through additional online as well as archival research	X	X	
3. students will be able to critically reflect on issues of Orientalism			X

Assessment:

Term Paper: 30%

- A term paper that deals with broader theoretical issues such as Nationalism, Orientalism, and inverted Orientalism using concrete examples from both the recommended and required readings

Continuous Assessment: 70%

- In-class translation exercises (20%). Each exercise involves the translation of a 200-word excerpt from the required readings.
- Translation assignment (50%)

Required Readings:

Primary readings are likely to include Edward Said, John Blofeld, Sanmao, Yu Qiuyu, William Somerset Maugham, Pierre Loti, Marc Aurel Stein, Joseph Rock, and others. We will read shorter works in their entirety and selections of longer works.

Lorna Parkes et al., *Hong Kong*, 19th Edition (Lonely Planet, 2021). ISBN: 9781788680776

Edward Said. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

薩伊：〈東方論述·導引——西方有關東方的概念〉。黃德興/劉慧儀譯，羅永生校。《解殖與民族主義》。香港：牛津大學出版社，1998年，頁29至59。

蒲樂道：《老蒲遊記：一個外國人對中國的回憶》。香港：明報出版社，1990年。

三毛：《萬水千山走遍》。香港：藝文圖書公司。1982年。

余秋雨：《文化苦旅》。台北：爾雅出版社。1992年。

William Somerset Maugham. *On a Chinese Screen: Sketches of Life in China*. London: Heinemann, 1922.

Pierre Loti. *The Last Days of Peking*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1902.

Recommended Readings:

Aurel Stein. *Ruins of Desert Cathay: Personal Narrative of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China*, vol.2, London: The Macmillan Company. 1912, 168-193.

Joseph F. Rock, “The Glories of the Minya Konka,” *National Geographic Magazine* 58, no. 3 (October 1930): 385-437.

Joseph F. Rock, “The Land of the Yellow Lama,” *National Geographic Magazine* 47, no. 4 (April 1925): 447-492, 467.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>

Rubrics for Term Paper:

Traits	Excellent	Good	Fair	Pass	Failure
Conception of argument	The argument has a clearly articulated thesis that is analytically interesting; the analysis is perceptive	The argument meets most of the criteria listed in the column to the left, but is lacking in one or more of them – or accomplishes all of them at a slightly lower level than excellence	The argument has an identifiable thesis, but it may be a bit too obvious or uninteresting; the analysis is a little superficial	The argument has an identifiable thesis, but it is quite uninteresting; there is little analysis	There is no argument or the argument has no leg to stand on; there is no analysis
Use of supporting evidence	The student provides ample evidence in support of his/her thesis; evidence is well-connected to the thesis	The student provides significant amounts of supporting evidence; some part may not be clearly related to the central thesis	The student provides some supporting evidence, but less than enough; there is an obvious amount of irrelevant detail	The student does not provide enough supporting evidence; the evidence relates only weakly to the thesis	The student provides no evidence to support his/her thesis
Organization and presentation	The content relates clearly to the central thesis; individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally very satisfying; clear connections between paragraphs; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Nearly all parts of the content relate clearly to the central thesis in a clear manner; all or most individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally satisfying; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Many parts of the content relate to the thesis in a clear manner, most individual paragraphs have a clear focus, and the order in which the ideas are presented generally makes sense	Most parts of the content do not relate to the central thesis in a clear manner; structurally confusing; ideas not presented in a proper order; connection between ideas not clear or satisfying	Most parts of the content are irrelevant to the central thesis; paragraphs are not structured; no topic sentences; no signposting

Language use	The student displays excellent language skills, with few grammatical usage errors, and the writing is perfectly understandable	The student makes minor errors in grammar and usage, but the writing is clear and generally understandable	The student makes several minor errors and/or a few major ones; the writing is mostly clear but may be difficult to understand in places	The student makes numerous writing errors that are serious enough that the writing is very difficult to understand	The student makes repeated and egregious errors that make his/her writing literally incomprehensible
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Rubrics for Translation Assignment & Exercise

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Pass	Failure
Understanding of source text	Display complete understanding of the source text.	Show good understanding of the source text.	Show adequate understanding of the source text.	Show limited understanding of the source text.	Show no understanding of the source text
Translation skills	Translate and write accurately with excellent lexical choice.	Translate and write accurately with good choice of words.	Translate and write accurately with average level of accuracy and fidelity.	Translate and write in the target language with limited degree of accuracy and fidelity.	Translate and write in the target language in a way that is unfaithful and inaccurate.
Prose style	Render in the target language expressively with appropriate and consistent style.	Render in the target language expressively with appropriate and consistent style (but not throughout the entire translation).	Render in the target language not consistently and expressively enough.	Render in the target language with limited consistency and expressiveness.	Render in the target language in a way that is inconsistent and jarringly unnatural
Language use	Convey the meaning effectively with few grammatical mistakes;	Convey the meaning clearly with random grammatical mistakes;	Convey the meaning not clearly with random and systematic errors;	Convey the meaning not clearly with random and systematic errors;	Fail to convey the meaning due to systematic errors