

EAST 556 Advanced Reading in Chinese: Chinese Religious Texts

McGill University
Winter 2025
Mon 8:35-11:25, SH680 465

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**In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or assessment scheme in this course is subject to change.

Course Description

This is an advanced primary text reading seminar on non-scriptural literature in premodern Chinese religions. We will be reading biographies, hagiographies, and tales of the strange and extraordinary to explore the diverse ways in which different religions have adopted, interpreted, and shaped the Chinese *imaginaire* of transcendence and the supernatural. This course seeks to equip students with: 1) bibliographic skills to work with premodern Chinese religious literature; 2) mastery of important religious terminologies and concepts; and 3) greater proficiency in reading classical Chinese texts.

Prerequisite

As we will be reading primary texts in classical Chinese, advanced Chinese is required of all students enrolled in this course.

Required Texts

All readings will be distributed in class or posted on MyCourses.

Assignments and Evaluation

Attendance & class performance	30%
A significant portion of each class meeting is focused on the practice of reading and translating together. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the assigned text before each class.	
Short annotated translation	15%
Presentation of translation project	10%
Final translation project	45%
Total	100%

McGill Policy Statements

Language of Submission:

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Academic Integrity:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures" (see [McGill's guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.