

## Inventing the Chinese Short Story: Translating the Genre in *Chinese Stories* (1893)

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This paper addresses the issue of literary genre in translation. The Chinese short story (短篇小說 *duanpian xiaoshuo*), a literary genre considered to be a modern product imported from the West and established in China in the early twentieth century, had captivated the attention of Western Sinologists before Chinese scholars rediscovered its presence within traditional Chinese literature. This paper provides a case study of *Chinese Stories*, an anthology of twelve Chinese short-form stories and two Chinese poems translated by the British Sinologist Robert Kennaway Douglas (1838–1913). The Chinese originals are selected from diverse sources, including *Jigu qiguan* 今古奇觀 (Remarkable stories new and old) and *shi'er lou* 十二樓 (The twelve towers). With contextual research and textual analysis from the narratological perspective, this paper shows that the evolving concept and theories of English short story since the mid-nineteenth century and the translator's sinological knowledge of Chinese fiction informed his recognition and translation of the Chinese short stories. It argues that literary genre is not as much intrinsically defined as historically and culturally constructed, imbued with aesthetic, epistemological, and cultural connotations. The translator's negotiation and manipulation of genre styles serve as indicators of the power dynamics at play within literary translation.