Introduction to Classical Chinese II
Chinese 101B
Winter Quarter 2019
Syllabus, Version of 1/4/19

Time: T/Th 12:30–1:45pm
Place: Phelps 1444

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Office Hours: By appointment
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Why Study Classical Chinese
Classical Chinese (wényánwén 文言文) refers to the written language of the premodern Chinese tradition and covers a period of some 2500 years (500 BCE–1920 CE). It bears roughly the same relationship to modern Mandarin that Latin does to Italian, Sanskrit to Hindi, and classical Greek to modern Greek. It served as the shared language of the elites in premodern China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Knowledge of classical Chinese opens you up to new worlds. It represents the human experience of something like one fifth of the people who ever walked the earth.

Knowledge of classical Chinese will also greatly improve your modern Chinese. The two are distinct languages, but the modern Chinese languages grew out of their classical ancestor and still bear its imprint. Most set phrases (chéngyǔ 成語) are summaries of or quotations from classical sources and therefore obey classical structures. Many of the puzzling usages in formal, written Mandarin (the kind used in newspapers) make perfect sense with a basic knowledge of classical Chinese. Moreover, nearly every Chinese person, to this day, was made to memorize at least a few classical poems as a child. Learning something about the classical tradition is useful for Mandarin in the same way that knowing a few passages from the Bible or Shakespeare is useful for modern English. Even a cursory familiarity will greatly enrich your speech.

Objectives
This course introduces students to the grammar and vocabulary of Classical Chinese. Readings cover a range of texts and genres from the early and medieval periods, with a few examples from later periods. Students should already have some familiarity with Chinese characters (Hànzi 漢字, Kanji, Hanja), whether through Mandarin Chinese or another East Asian language.

The main goal of this course is to achieve the foundations of a technical understanding of Classical Chinese through its grammar, through its syntax, through its essential vocabulary, and through the reference works which provide deeper understanding of these elements. These grammatical rules are minimal compared to inflected languages, but this doesn’t mean that they don’t exist, or that Classical Chinese is “easy” compared to, say, Latin or Sanskrit or Old English or Biblical Hebrew.
On the contrary, Classical Chinese is difficult precisely because of its minimal grammatical markers. It is a notoriously elliptical language, one which places great value on concision, allusion, rhythm, and parallelism. This results in a sort of terse, telegraphic style that takes many hours of reading to adapt to. Therefore, in order to gain a familiarity with some of these poetic qualities, we will spend part of every class reciting passages out loud as a group. These verses will also help students familiarize themselves with different reading orientations and with some of the shared canon of Classical Chinese drawn on by later literati.

Requirements

- **Attend all classes.** You get one absence, no questions asked. After that, your attendance grade will be severely deducted.
- **Translate the text into English, and explain how your translation reflects the grammar of the original.** The working language of this class is English. The majority of every class will be occupied by reading the text and your translation, followed by a discussion of your choices. This will be the bulk of what determines your grade. Preparation is absolutely essential.
- **Complete the quizzes.** These are designed to help you become familiar with important aspects of premodern Chinese culture and with the tools that help you access them. Most of them are easy points.
- **No laptops or phones during class** (except for students requiring special accommodations). There are many excellent online resources for studying classical Chinese, and there are good reasons for doing one’s work on a computer. You’re welcome to avail yourself of all these options outside the classroom. However, I have found that during seminar-style classes, the physical barriers created by laptops and other screens are hindrances to communication.
• **Print the main text and write your notes on it.** This avoids in-class laptop and phone usage (see above). This may cost you a few dollars in printing fees, but I guarantee that it will be cheaper than a textbook or reader you would buy at the bookstore. If the printing fees would cause you serious financial hardship, please email me, and we will make arrangements.

• **Familiarity with Chinese Characters 漢字.** If you are coming to Classical Chinese via one of the modern Chinese languages (Mandarin, Cantonese, Hokkien, etc.), two years of formal training is the minimum requirement. If you are coming from another Asian language that uses Chinese characters (Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese), three or four years is strongly recommended. Classical Chinese is a cosmopolitan language with many possible methods of pronunciation. Therefore, you may read the text out loud in any legitimate pronunciation, so long as it is read fluidly. Given the background of most students, the main method of pronunciation used in class will be Modern Standard Mandarin (pǔtōnghuà 普通話, guóyǔ 国語). However, we listen to recitations of texts in a variety of possible pronunciations. Please note: *I will not test you on character memorization.* Nevertheless, the more that you review and memorize individual characters and wholes passages, the easier and faster you will be able to do the readings.

**WARNING to advanced students of Mandarin and native Chinese speakers: in many cases, the classical usage and meaning of a character are considerably different from the modern.**

**Evaluation**

- Attendance and participation 30%
- Take-home midterm 25%
- Quizzes 10%
- Take-home final exam 35%

**Reference works**

- Edwin Pulleyblank, *An Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar*
- Zdic.net
- Pleco (App), useful add-ons: MoE Dict (free), Student’s Dict (=Kroll, $39.99), Hányǔ dàcídǎn 漢語大辭典 ($49.99)
- Others will be introduced as needed during class

**Texts**

All texts will be posted as PDFs on Gauchospace. If printing PDFs will cause a great financial burden, please email me, and we will make arrangements.

**Schedule**

*The following is a rough sketch of the plan for this course. It may be modified as the quarter progresses to accommodate detours and to adjust to students’ natural pace of learning. Revised versions may be posted on Gauchospace later in the quarter.*
Introduction
1/8  Session 1: Introduction to the Course
    USE: Paul Kroll, *A Student’s Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese*
    RECITE: 李季蘭「相思怨」

Unit 1: Biographies of Exemplary Women 列女傳
1/10 Session 2
    QUIZ: Introduce yourself (https://goo.gl/forms/eaIxMD58URFrwDAY2)
    PREPARE: 列女傳：鄒孟軻母 1 (Rouzer 20)
    RECITE: 李季蘭「相思怨」、古詩十九首（其十九）

1/15 Session 3
    QUIZ: Warring States
    PREPARE: 列女傳：鄒孟軻母 2 (Rouzer 21)
    RECITE: 古詩十九首（其十九）、魚玄機 1

1/17 Session 4
    PREPARE: 列女傳：鄒孟軻母 2 (Rouzer 21)
    RECITE: 魚玄機 1–2

Unit 2: Confucianism 儒家
1/22 Session 5
    USE: 《古漢語常用字字典》
    QUIZ: Chinese Dynasties
    PREPARE: 孟子 1 (Rouzer 22)
    RECITE: 大學

1/24 Session 6
    PREPARE: 孟子 2 (Rouzer 23)
    RECITE: 大學

1/29 Session 7
    PREPARE: 論語, sections 1–3, 6 （王力《古代漢語》）
    RECITE: 大學

Unit 3: Daoism 道家
1/31 Session 8
    QUIZ: Bopomofo transcription
    USE: Bopomofo（注音符號）
    PREPARE: 莊子 1（張松輝《莊子讀本》第 288 頁）
    莊子 2（張松輝《莊子讀本》第 46–48 頁）
    RECITE: 道德經 81

2/5 Session 9
    PREPARE: 莊子 3（郭慶藩「莊子集釋」第 309–10 頁）
    莊子 4（郭慶藩「莊子集釋」第 490–92 頁）
    RECITE: 道德經 81

2/7 Session 10
Optional review session

**Take-home midterm due 2/7 at 11:59pm**

Unit 5: Buddhism 佛教
2/12  Session 11
USE: *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* (http://buddhism-dict.net/ddb/)
PREPARE: Rules about Monks’ Fingernails (from 四分律)
RECITE: 般若波羅蜜多心經
2/14  Session 12
QUIZ: Buddhist vocabulary
PREPARE: 臨濟義玄 §1–3 (Kieschnick, *A Primer in Chinese Buddhist Writings*)
RECITE: 般若波羅蜜多心經
2/19  Session 13
PREPARE: 臨濟義玄 §4–7 (Kieschnick, *A Primer in Chinese Buddhist Writings*)
RECITE: 般若波羅蜜多心經

Unit 6: Poetry 詩
2/21  Session 14
QUIZ: Major poetry forms
USE: http://sou-yun.com
PREPARE: 陶潛「飲酒」（一、二）「讀山海經」（王力《古代漢語》）
2/26  Session 15
USE: Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*
PREPARE: 李白「贈孟浩然」「送友人」（王力《古代漢語》）
李白「宣州謝朓樓餞別校書叔雲」（李白集校注）
2/28  Session 16
PREPARE: 黃遵憲「紀事九首」序、其九

Unit 7: Pseudobiography 假傳
3/5  Session 17
USE: 《漢語大辭典》
PREPARE: 韓愈《毛穎傳》
3/7  Session 18
PREPARE: 韓愈《毛穎傳》、李奎報《麴先生傳》
3/12  Session 19
PREPARE: 李奎報《麴先生傳》
3/14  Session 20
Optional review session

**Take-Home Final Exam due 3/14 at 11:59pm Pacific Standard Time**
Men sometimes speak as if the study of the classics would at length make way for more modern and practical studies; but the adventurous student will always study classics, in whatever language they may be written, and however ancient they may be... They are the only oracles which are not decayed.... We might as well omit to study Nature because she is old. To read well—that is, to read true books in a true spirit—is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem.... Those who have not learned to read the ancient classics in the language in which they were written must have a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the human race.

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Nescire autem quid ante quam natus sis acciderit, id est semper esse puerum. [Who knows only his own generation remains forever a child.]

—Cicero, *De Oratore*, sec. 120

The translator’s duty, as I understand it, is not to simplify or modernize an obscure or antiquated term in the original, but to render its obscurity and oddity.

—Vladimir Nabokov, letter to Edmund Wilson

The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land.

—Hugo of St. Victor, quoted in Erich Auerbach, “Philology and Weltliteratur”

子曰：「不憤不啟，不悱不發；舉一隅，不以三隅反，則不復也。」

—論語 7.8