Chinese 461 (002)
Introductory Classical Chinese
Fall 2013

Lecture Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:30 am -- 9:20 am
Lecture Room: Moore Hall 226
Course Website:  https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal/site/MAN.79953.201410
For the updated version of this syllabus, consult the course website.

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Course Description
This course is designed to give students an introduction to classical Chinese, known in Chinese as 文言文, 古文, or 古代汉语 (古代漢語). Classical Chinese is, strictly speaking, the written language used in China from the late Zhou dynasty (1045-256 BC) through the Han dynasty (206 BC-- 220 AD). It is an important language both because of the many texts written in it (more are still coming to light through archaeological discoveries) and because of its profound influence on the languages of China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Although the language used in later contexts is not, strictly speaking, Classical Chinese (in case of China, the language of formal writing in the later imperial period is referred to as Literary Chinese), many styles of writing incorporate Classical features that had fallen out of use in spoken language. Even today, formal writing and speech often include expressions and structures that can be traced back to Classical Chinese. Knowledge of Classical Chinese is thus a valuable tool for understanding many aspects of the East Asian cultural heritage as well as for learning modern Chinese.

In this course, students will be introduced to fundamental vocabulary, basic sentence patterns and grammar of Classical Chinese through the reading of authentic texts ranging from a variety of literary genres including short proverbs, philosophical writings, and historical literature.

Learning Goals
By the end of the course, students
[1] understand the basic sentence patterns, grammar and usage of Classical Chinese
[2] have read some of the well-known classical texts and are able to translate those texts into modern Chinese or English
[3] are able to recognize in modern Chinese some of the forms and phrases that come directly from Classical Chinese and have a basic understanding of how the modern written language was
shaped by its precedent
[4] demonstrate preliminary knowledge of the kinds of interpretive issues frequently studied and
debated by Classical Chinese scholars
[5] have increased proficiency in all aspects of modern Chinese

Course requirements

[1] Class preparation, participation and exercises (including attendance): (35%)
[2] Homework assignments (20%)
[3] One mid-term exam in class, closed book (20%)
[4] The final exam, closed book (25%)

Course Materials

Textbook

There is no required textbook for the course. However, our readings will be excerpts from the
following textbooks.


All readings from the above books will be made available on the course website.

Simplified-form Chinese characters vs. traditional-form characters:

All of the lessons in the three textbooks above are written in traditional-form characters (fántízi 繁体字). The reason and justification for this practice is simple: all Classical Chinese texts were written in this form of Chinese orthography (simplified characters did not come into common use in China until the middle of the twentieth century). If you are unfamiliar with traditional-form characters, do not despair! You will get used to them!

Dictionaries and References

• Since most of the Chinese characters that appear in three textbooks above are explained, you will not need to do much dictionary work in this class. No doubt, however, you will occasionally encounter a character you do not recognize.
Traditional sources that I suggest are:

  (Reference-Library Use Only: PL1455 .M342 Index 1944 )
-- *Dictionary of Old and Middle Chinese*: Bernhard Karlgren's Grammata serica recensa  
  alphabetically arranged / by Tor Ulving (Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis 1997)  
-- *Wang Li* 王力, ed., *Gŭdài Hányǔ chángyòngzì zìdĭan* 古漢語常用字字典 (Beijing:  
  Zhonghua shuju, 2000). (if your command of written modern Chinese is strong)

Online sources that I suggest are:

-- [http://ctext.org/dictionary](http://ctext.org/dictionary) (Chinese Text Project)
-- [http://www.zhongwen.com](http://www.zhongwen.com) (the character (zì 字) and word (cí 詞/词) dictionary)
-- [http://www.wenlin.com/demo](http://www.wenlin.com/demo) (a software program, free, demo download)

- Other References

  (Asian Ref. PL1101 .P84 1995)
  (Asian Ref. PL2243 .H37 )