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CLASSICAL CHINESE

A BASIC READER

Naiying Yuan, Haitao Tang, and James Geiss

Classical Chinese: A Basic Reader is the most comprehensive and authoritative textbook on the language, literature, philosophy, history, and religion of premodern China. Rigorously and extensively field-tested and fine-tuned for years in classroom settings by three members of the Chinese Linguistics Project at Princeton University, it sets a new standard for the field.

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Naiying Yuan and Haitao Tang are Lecturers Emeritus in the Department of East Asian Languages, and in the Chinese Linguistics Project, at Princeton University. Tang is coauthor of *Chinese Primer*, an introductory Chinese language textbook (Princeton). James Geiss, who earned his Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1979, was a Ming scholar and worked for many years as research associate, editor, and contributing author for the *Cambridge History of China Project*.

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CLASSICAL CHINESE: A Basic Reader



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CLASSICAL CHINESE
A BASIC READER

TEXTS

袁乃瑛 唐海濤 蓋杰民
Naiying Yuan Haitao Tang James Geiss

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A BASIC READER

GLOSSARIES

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A BASIC READER

ANALYSES

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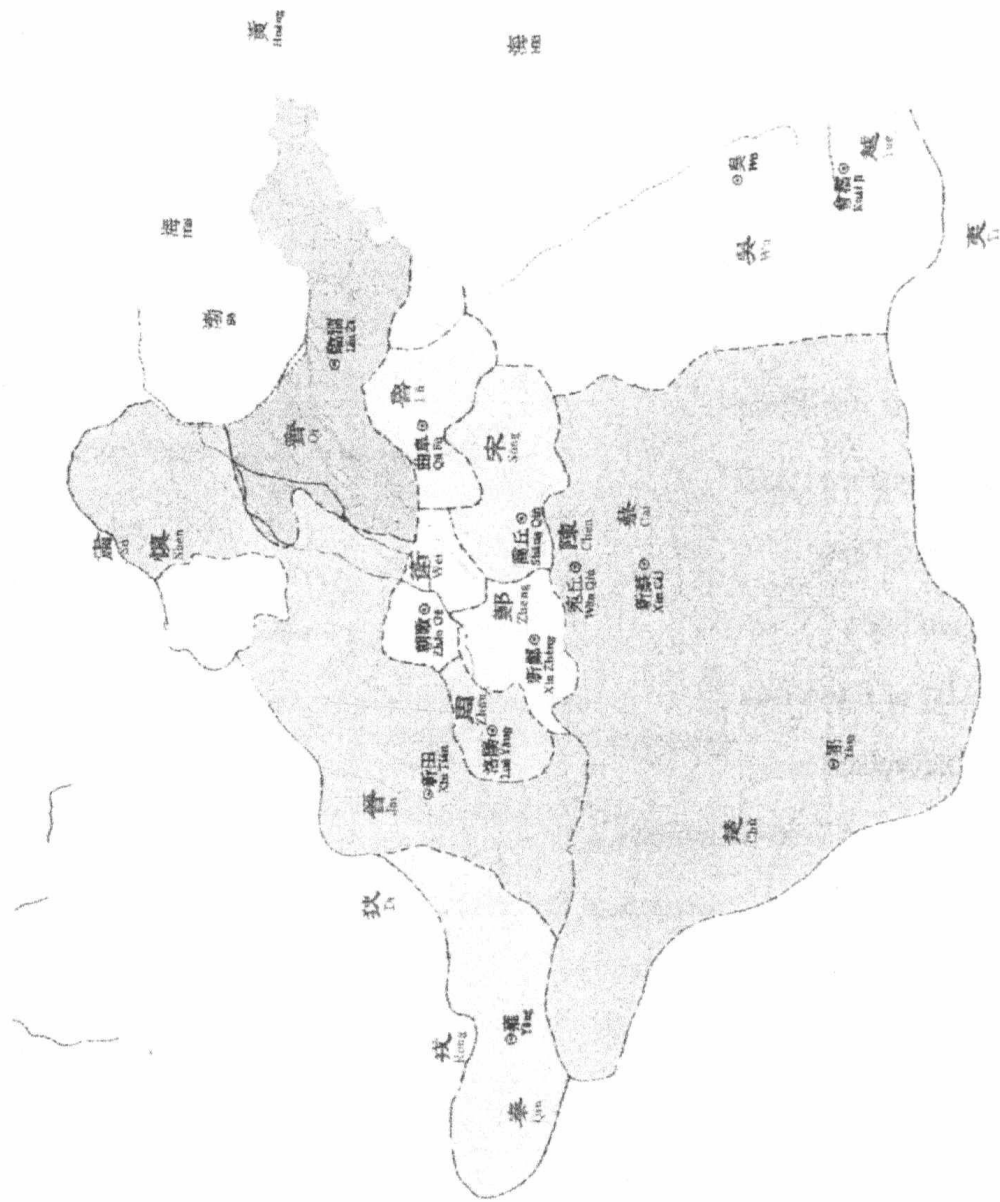
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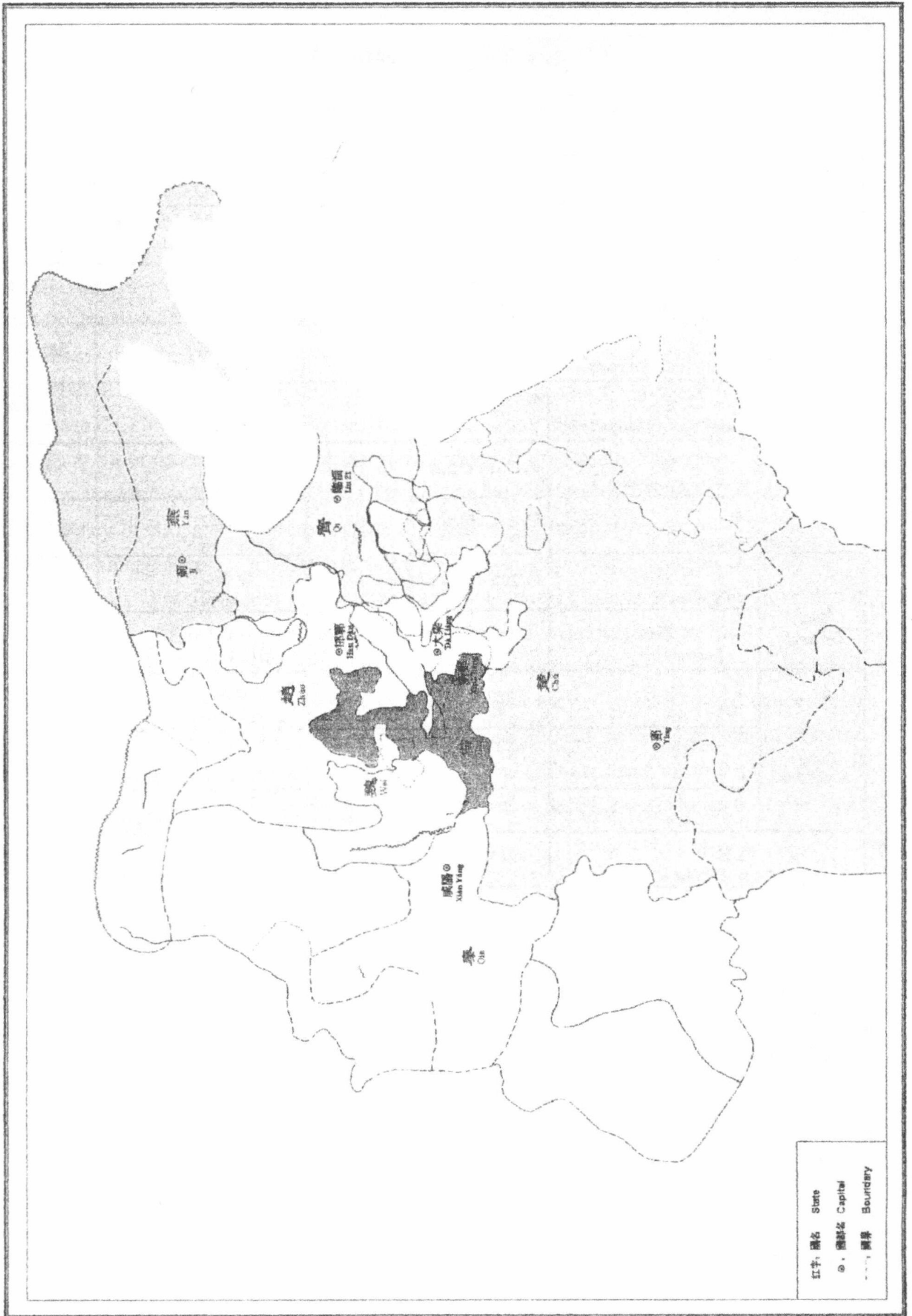
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春秋列國圖



紅字, 國名 State
 ⊙, 國都名 Capital
 ---, 國界 Boundary

戰國七雄圖



中國歷史年代簡表

A Brief Chinese Chronology

夏 Xia Dynasty		約前 21 世紀 - 約前 16 世紀		北齊 Northern Qi	550-577
商 Shang Dynasty		約前 16 世紀 - 約前 11 世紀		西魏 Western Wei	535-556
周 Zhou Dynasy	西周 Western Zhou Dynasty	約前 11 世紀 - 前 771		北周 Northern Zhou	557-581
	東周 Eastern Zhou Dynasty	前 770 - 前 256	隋 Sui Dynasty		581-618
	春秋 Spring and Autumn Period	前 770 - 前 476	唐 Tang Dynasty		618-907
	戰國 Warring States Period	前 770 - 前 221	五代 Five Synasties	後梁 Later Liang	907-923
秦 Qin Dynasty		前 221 - 前 207		後唐 Later Tang	923-936
漢 Han Dynasty	西漢 Western Han	前 206 - 公元 24		後晉 Later Jin	936-946
	東漢 Eastern Han	25-220		後漢 Later Han	947-950
三國 Three Kingdoms	魏 Wei	220-265		後周 Later Zhou	951-960
	蜀 Shu	221-263	宋 Song Dynasty	北宋 Northern Song Dynasty	960-1127
	吳 Wu	222-280		南宋 Southern Song Dynasty	1127-1279
西晉 Western Jin Dynasty		265-316	遼 Liao Dynasty		916-1125
東晉 Eastern Jin Dynasty		317-420	金 Jin Dynasty		1115-1234
宋 Song		420-479	元 Yuan Dynasty		1271-1368
南朝 齊 Southern Qi		479-502	明 Ming Dynasty		1368-1644
南北朝 Southern Dynasties	梁 Liang	502-557	清 Qing Dynasty		1644-1911
and Northern Dynasties	陳 Chen	557-589	中華民國 Republic of China		1912-
北朝 Northern Dynasties	北魏 Northern Wei	368-534	中華人民共和國 People's Republic of China		1949-
	東魏 Eastern Wei	534-550			

Foreword

Classical, or literary, Chinese is a written language that matured long before the Qín era. It developed and was used in China's governing and elite culture for nearly three millenia. Though it has undergone changes and developments, its syntactical structures in general have remained intact. Its importance lies in part because the great legacies of Chinese culture down to the twentieth century were recorded and preserved in this medium. Classical Chinese is thus the language in which much of Chinese culture has long been transmitted. In consequence, it is only through this medium that one can most fully and accurately understand Chinese cultural traditions. In addition, many idioms, set phrases, allusions, and sentence patterns in modern Chinese are inherited from classical Chinese. Even when reading academic writings in modern Chinese, one benefits greatly from having an adequate proficiency in classical Chinese, because in discussing specific topics or making their own points, Chinese scholars tend to cite or quote relevant supporting material from classical Chinese texts. For this reason, a good command of classical Chinese is indispensable for the study of Chinese literature, thought, history, political and social institutions, etc.

Confucius said: "If an artisan wishes to do his work well, he must first sharpen his tools." With this textbook we therefore seek to introduce the major grammatical structures of classical Chinese using an analytical and comparative approach, so as to provide students the 'sharpened tools' with which they can explore classical Chinese texts, or, to put it in another way, this textbook seeks to provide students the key that unlocks the door to the bright and fertile field of Chinese studies.

To accomplish this, the textbook is set up in three volumes. Volume one contains the main texts by which the student is introduced to the various lingual and syntactic aspects of classical Chinese. Volume two contains the glossaries to these texts, and volume three, the detailed grammatical analyses of the texts.

The forty textual selections in volume one have been chosen from fourteen Chinese classics written between the fifth century B.C. and the first century A. D. They have been taken directly from authoritative editions such as SBBY (SPPY) and SBCK (SPTK), with no words or structure altered for pedagogical reasons. Thus, the student, from the very beginning of his or her study, deals directly with authentic classical texts. These texts have been carefully selected on the basis of their merits both in terms of their form--because they illustrate important grammatical patterns--and in terms of their content--because they represent important salient features of Chinese culture, such as the wit, humor, wisdom,

moral conviction, and political ideals it exhibits. The classical Chinese texts and their modern Chinese translations occupy opposite pages in the book, so that they can be consulted and compared readily. Both the classical and the modern texts are provided with pinyin phonetics for pronunciation, so that students can vocalize them correctly. The English translation of the text facilitates for the students a quick and thorough understanding of the classical passage as a whole. These reading texts are pedagogically arranged so that they proceed from short texts to longer ones, and from the grammatically simple and easy to the more complicated and difficult. The appended exercises that are provided in a variety of formats are meant to help students review and reinforce their classroom learning.

Volume two contains all the glossaries to the texts in Volume one. Each glossary entry is phonetically spelled out, grammatically classified, and its meaning within the context in which it is used, fully explained. Within the explanation, should there be unfamiliar yet important terms, these terms are further explained, so that students can understand fully both the original classical texts and the explanatory modern ones. The annotations are given in both modern Chinese and in English. Also should there exist a proverb or a set phrase that has been derived from a text, this has been duly noted.

Volume three provides both grammatical analyses as well as literal translations of the texts in Volume one. Every sentence that appears in a text in Volume one is fully diagrammed to show the grammatical relations between its various parts. In the diagrams it has often been necessary to insert items of context that classical Chinese texts may omit, such as subjects and/or objects, or items that are customarily omitted in classical Chinese, such as prepositions, in order to show the entire grammatical structure of the sentence in terms of modern Chinese or English. Such added elements have been put in **brackets** in the translations. When there is a major grammatical point that deserves special attention, it has been fully explained with an **asterisk** preceding it. After this diagrammatic analysis, each sentence is translated into both modern Chinese and English. This translation generally is provided in three clear steps: first, the sentence is translated verbatim; second, the differences between classical and modern Chinese, and between Chinese and English are highlighted; and third, the entire sentence is rendered into smooth modern Chinese and natural English respectively. Of these steps, the second is the most important. In this step, all the contemporary lingual components classical Chinese omits are reflected in **brackets** in the modern Chinese translation, any words added to make the meaning of a sentence clear and its flow natural in modern translation are marked by a **smaller font type**, with those changes made for rhetorical reasons given in **boldface**. In the English version, all the counterparts

of the aforementioned changes and additions shown in the modern Chinese translation appear in the English translation as well, in **brackets**, in **smaller font type**, and in **boldface**, while words in *italics* in the English translation represent the elements that have no counterpart in the original Chinese texts but that are obligatory to make sense in English. Furthermore, these words in *italics* pinpoint the grammatical differences between Chinese and English. Students interested in comparing the two languages will find this most helpful.

In order to anticipate the sorts of questions that might be raised in a classroom, we have tried our best to provide clear and detailed explanations. In addition, this textbook has been designed so as to be useful whether a teacher conducts the course in Chinese or in English. We do wish to point out that this textbook represents a bold attempt to experiment with a new, though not untried, approach to the teaching of classical Chinese, and, as such, will inevitably yet have some shortcomings. We hope that they are few, and hope, furthermore, that the users of this textbook would provide us comments on their experiences with it as well as offering us any constructive suggestions they might have for its improvement.

The Authors

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The Authors

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