Foreword

Classical, or literary, Chinese is a written language that matured long before the Qin 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