

Lesson 4

Active Vocabulary

然	<i>rán</i>	yes, thus; but
以	<i>yǐ</i>	take, use, with
為	<i>wéi</i>	be, do
為	<i>wèi</i>	for
與	<i>yǔ</i>	and, with; give
莫	<i>mò</i>	none, not
何	<i>hé</i>	what? how?
弗	<i>fú</i>	not + him/her/it
自	<i>zì</i>	self; from
之	<i>zhī</i>	go
乃	<i>nǎi</i>	then, only then; be
及	<i>jí</i>	arrive at, when; as well as
遂	<i>suì</i>	follow, after that, then
矛	<i>máo</i>	spear
行	<i>xíng</i>	walk; take action; do
舌	<i>shé</i>	tongue
予	<i>yú</i>	I
或	<i>huò</i>	someone; perhaps
寧	<i>níng</i>	rather
苗	<i>miáo</i>	sprouts
飲	<i>yǐn</i>	drink

Proper Names

楊子	<i>Yáng Zǐ</i>	Yáng Zhū 楊朱, egoist philosopher, 4th cent. B.C.?
楚	<i>Chǔ</i>	early Chinese kingdom
鄭	<i>Zhèng</i>	early Chinese kingdom
杜甫	<i>Dù Fǔ</i>	Tang poet (712-770)
韓非子	<i>Hán Fēi Zǐ</i>	legalist philosopher, 3rd Cent. B.C.
左傳	<i>Zuǒ Zhuàn</i>	an early Chinese work of history

Vocabulary Notes

1. 然 *rán*

Rán means “yes” or “thus.” It can serve as a kind of suffix to adjectives to form adverbs; in this case it functions like the English “-ly.”

其所以然	the reason it is thus
無若宋人然	Don't be like the man of Song. (無 here means “don't”)
自然	“self-thus” = natural, naturally
笑然	laughing(ly)

Common compounds with *rán*:

然後	afterward
然而	but

2. 以 *yǐ*

Yǐ can mean “take,” “use,” “by means of,” “in order to,” “as a result of.”

以一知萬	by means of one, know 10,000
以子之矛	use your spear
食，以食與人也	“To feed” is to take food and give it to someone.

Yǐ is often used with *wéi* to mean “take X as Y,” “treat X as Y.”

以白為黑	consider white as black
子以我為不信	You consider me untrustworthy.
天地不仁，以萬物為芻狗 (芻 <i>chú</i> —straw)	Heaven and Earth are not humane: they treat the myriad creatures like straw dogs. (Lao Zi)

Common compounds with *yǐ*:

是以	thus, therefore
所以	that by which, the reason
何以	why? how?

3. 為 *wéi, wèi*

Wei has two different uses, verbal and prepositional, distinguished by tone.

Wéi (second tone) means “to act as,” “to serve as,” “to be,” “to do.” This usage appeared in the section on dictionary entries in Lesson 3. More examples:

是可為也	This can be done.
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我所以為此者 The reason I did this
 常道無為而無不為 The constant Way does not act, but nothing is not
 done. (Lao Zi)

Wèi (fourth tone) means “for the benefit of” or “because”

為人 for [other] people
 為其母 for his mother
 為我 for myself
 楊子取為我 Yang Zi was a hedonist. (Lit., Yang Zi chose ‘for myself.’)
 誰為為之 Who are you doing this for?

4. 與 yǔ

Yǔ has several meanings; among them are:

“and,” “with”

天與地 heaven and earth
 詩與畫 poetry and painting
 仁與義 humanity and righteousness

“give”

與之肉 give him meat
 少取多與 take little and give much

5. 莫 mò

Mò means “none” or “not.” It is often used with *bì* 不 to form a double negative:
 “none does not = all do”

莫能為也 No one can do it.
 莫不知 Everyone knows.
 莫大於此 None is bigger than this.
 天下莫不與也 Everyone in the world will give.

6. 何 hé

Hé means “what?” or “how?”

何知 How do you/I know?
 今日何日 What day is it today?
 問女何所思 I ask the woman what she is thinking about.
 何日復歸來 When shall I return again?

Some common compounds with *hé*:

何人 who?

何時	when?
何以	how? In what way?
如何	how? How would that be?
為何	why? What for?
何必	why must?

7. 弗 *fú*

Fú is a contraction of *bù* 不 and *zhī* 之 : “not + him/her/it.”

弗信	not trust him/her
弗問	not ask him/her
弗可以加矣	You can't add anything to it.

8. 自 *zì*

Zì can mean “oneself,” “itself,” “by itself.”

自愛	love oneself
自利	benefit oneself
自然	self-like, natural
自強	make oneself strong

Zì can also mean “from” (time or space)

自古	from ancient times
君自故鄉來	You have come from [our] hometown.
有朋自遠方來	to have a colleague come from afar

9. 之 *zhī*

Two meanings of *zhī* were introduced in Lesson 2. Another meaning is “to go.”

楊子之宋	Yang Zi went to Song.
問君何所之	I ask you where you are going.

10. 乃 *nǎi*

Nǎi sometimes means “then,” “only then.”

乃止	then [he/she/they] stopped
乃曰	then [he/she] said
兵乃出	Only then did/will the soldiers set forth.
又數年乃死	After several more years he died.

Nǎi can also mean “to be,” “is none other than.”

X 視 之 , 乃 Y 也	X looked at him, and it turned out to be Y.
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11. 及 *jí*

Jí means “arrive at,” “when,” “as well as.”

及其老也

when he is old

不及

not as good as, not come up to the level of
from ancient times to the present

自古及今

今日已不及

We won't get to it today.

12. 遂 *sui*

Sui means “follow,” “after that,” “then.”

遂用之

Then he used him.

王遂命曰：

Then the king ordered: ...

遂飲其酒

Then he drank his wine.

Introduction to Classical Literary Forms and Works, Part I

A. Anecdotes

Several of the reading passages in this lesson are short anecdotes from works of philosophy and history, specifically, from *Mencius*, *Han Fei Zi*, and the *Zuo Zhuan*. Anecdotes are succinct and pointed stories with clear messages, usually presented in a humorous manner. They are often used by Mencius, Han Fei Zi, and the Daoist Zhuang Zi; and indeed several early texts are entirely composed of anecdotes. Like Jesus' parables or Aesop's Fables, they present important concepts in clear and easily remembered concrete narratives. Many *chéngyǔ* derive from early anecdotes.

B. Quotations from the *Analects* and *Mencius*

In the previous lesson, and again in this lesson, there are several selections from the major Confucian classics the *Analects* and *Mencius*. It is important to understand that these two works are collections of short self-contained sayings, and not extended philosophical treatises. In *Mencius* we do sometimes find discourses that extend over a page or so of text, but more often the component passages consist only of a few sentences in isolation. It is likely that these quotations from Confucius and Mencius do not represent actual utterances of the two thinkers, but rather a distillation or crystallization of their ideas. The sentences are often concise to the point of being almost incomprehensible, and many volumes of commentary have been written to explain them.

C. Tang Poems

This lesson contains poems by Du Fu, Wang Wei, and Li Bai, three of the most famous of all Chinese poets. They all lived at approximately the same time, during the 8th century, in the middle of the Tang dynasty. Two of them, Du Fu and Li Bai, were friends, and sometimes wrote poems to each other. The poem by Du Fu in this lesson is in the *juéjù* 絕句 form, which is characterized by having four lines, all of which are either five or seven characters long. This poem, like the two poems by Wang Wei in the previous lesson, is a "five-word *juéjù*" 五言絕句. *Juéjù* are considered to be a sub-genre of *shī* 詩 poetry.

The other two poems in this lesson are *gǔ shī* 古詩, or Old Poems. *Gǔ shī* may have any even number of lines, but they too characteristically have either five or seven characters in each line. Though Li Bai's poem has eight lines, typical of the *lǜ shī* 律詩 or Regulated Poems, he does not follow the strict rules of parallelism required of the *lǜ shī* in this example.

In Tang *shī*, poets typically try to capture a particular moment in a specific natural setting. They strive to match the scene (*jǐng* 景) with a particular feeling (*qíng* 情), and to balance stillness (*jìng* 靜) with motion (*dòng* 動). Often the first part of the poem describes the scene and the second part introduces a human concern.

Conciseness

A common characteristic of all the literary forms mentioned here is the conciseness of language found in each. The ability to express complex ideas or images with only a handful of characters is the genius of the classical Chinese language, and it is exploited to the full by the great Chinese writers. This extreme economy of language provides much of the aesthetic pleasure of classical Chinese literature. But the conciseness that makes the language so powerful can also make the meaning obscure. A Chinese saying acknowledges the problem, but suggests that after repeated reading, the meaning of a text will become clear by itself: 讀書百遍，其義自見。

Exercises

Definitions

1. 以，用也。
2. 及，至也。自後而至曰及。
3. 衣，以衣衣人也。
4. 然，是也，如此也。
5. 莫，無也，不也。
6. 行，往也，去也，路也。
7. 或，疑而未定。
8. 苗，草初生曰苗。（初 *chū*—first）

Sentences

1. 此者何如也？
2. 何為其然也？
3. 吾母與弟在長安。
4. 不以兵強天下。
5. 吾雖知之，弗能言也。
6. 事雖小，不為不成。
7. 以是為非。
8. 君子以行言，小人以舌言。
9. 是以不去。
10. 子何以知之？
11. 聞其言不如得其所言。
12. 此孔子之所以不言也。
13. 雖有至道，弗學，不知其善也。
14. 聖人無常心，以百姓心為心。
15. 目之所美，心以為不義，弗敢視也。
16. 聖人不知亂之所自起，則不能治。

Sentences from Confucian texts

1. 子曰：古之學者為己，今之學者為人。(14.25)
2. 子曰：不知命，無以為君子也。不知禮，無以立也。
不知言，無以知人也。(20.3)
3. 子曰：可與言而不與之言，失人也。不可與言而與之言，失言。
知者不失人，亦不失言。(15.7)
4. 孟子曰：三代得天下也，以仁。其失天下，以不仁。(Mencius 4a.3)
(三代 *sān dài*—the three early dynasties 夏商周 *Xià, Shāng, and Zhōu*)
5. 孟子曰：君仁莫不仁，君義莫不義。(4b.5)
6. 孟子曰：君子之於物也，愛之而弗仁。於民也，仁之而弗親。
親親而仁民，仁民而愛物。(7a.45)
7. 孟子曰：不孝有三，無後為大。... (4a.26)
8. 孟子曰：仁之實，事親是也。義之實，從兄是也。... (4a.27)
9. 孟子曰：非禮之禮，非義之義，大人弗為。(4b.6)
10. 孟子曰：楊子取為我，拔一毛而利天下，不為也。(7a.26)
(拔 *bá*—pluck, pull out)

Four Anecdotes

1. From 孟子 2a.2

揠苗助長

宋人有閔其苗之不長而揠之者。芒芒然歸，謂其人曰：「今日病矣。予助苗長矣。」其子趨而往視之，苗則槁矣。天下之不助苗長者寡矣。

閔	<i>mǐn</i>	worry about
揠	<i>yà</i>	pull up, tug on
芒芒然	<i>mángmángrán</i>	tired, exhausted
趨	<i>qū</i>	hurry, rush
槁	<i>gǎo</i>	dried up
寡	<i>guǎ</i>	少也

2. From 左傳

宋人獻玉

宋人或得玉，獻諸子罕，子罕弗受。獻玉者曰：「以示玉人，玉人以為寶也，故敢獻之。」子罕曰：「吾以無貪為寶，爾以玉為寶。若以與我，皆喪寶也。不若人有其寶。」

獻	<i>xiàn</i>	present to a superior
諸	<i>zhū</i>	contraction of 之於
子罕	<i>Zihǎn</i>	人名
示	<i>shì</i>	show
玉人	<i>yùrén</i>	“jade man,” jade expert
貪	<i>tān</i>	greedy
爾	<i>ér</i>	you
喪	<i>sàng</i>	mourn; lose
不若	<i>búruò</i>	it would be better to, might as well

3. From 韓非子

矛盾

楚人有鬻盾與矛者，譽之曰：「吾盾之堅，物莫能陷也。」又譽其矛曰：「吾矛之利，於物無不陷也。」或曰：「以子之矛，攻子之盾，何如？」其人弗能應也。

鬻	<i>yù</i>	即賣
盾	<i>dùn</i>	shield
譽	<i>yù</i>	praise
堅	<i>jiān</i>	strong, sturdy
陷	<i>xiàn</i>	penetrate
利	<i>lì</i>	(here) sharp
攻	<i>gōng</i>	attack

4. From 韓非子

鄭人置履

鄭人有且置履者，先自度其足而置其坐。至之市而忘操之。已得履，乃曰：「吾忘持度。」反歸取之。及之，市罷，遂不得履。人曰：「何不試之以足？」曰：「寧信度，無自信也。」

且	<i>qiě</i>	about to
置	<i>zhì</i>	buy; put
履	<i>lǚ</i>	shoes
度	<i>duó</i>	measure
度	<i>dù</i>	measurement
市	<i>shì</i>	market
操	<i>caō</i>	take
持	<i>chí</i>	take
罷	<i>bà</i>	finish, end

Three Poems

1. 杜甫 絕句

江碧鳥逾白，山青花欲燃。今春看又過，何日是歸年？

碧	<i>bì</i>	jade green
逾	<i>yú</i>	more, very
燃	<i>rán</i>	burn

2. 王維 送別

下馬飲君酒，問君何所之。君言不得意，歸臥南山陲。
但去莫復問，白雲無盡時。

送別	<i>sòngbié</i>	send someone off
臥	<i>wò</i>	lie down
陲	<i>chuí</i>	edge, border
盡	<i>jìn</i>	end, cease

3. 李白 金鄉送韋八之西京

客自長安來，還歸長安去。狂風吹我心，西掛咸陽樹。
此情不可道，此別何時遇。望望不見君，連山起煙霧。

(Title: At Jinxiang [in Shandong province] Sending off Eighth Master Wei, who is going to the Western Capital [Chang'an])

韋	<i>Wéi</i>	[surname]
狂	<i>kuáng</i>	wild, mad
吹	<i>chuī</i>	blow
挂	<i>guà</i>	hang
咸陽	<i>Xiányáng</i>	early capital of China, near Changan
別	<i>bié</i>	separate, part
遇	<i>yù</i>	encounter, meet
連	<i>lián</i>	connected, one after another
煙	<i>yān</i>	smoke, haze
霧	<i>wù</i>	mist

Chengyu

1. 一毛不拔
2. 以子之矛，攻子之盾
3. 愛莫能助
4. 飲水思源
5. 行成于思