

Course Handbook: Chinese

Faculty of Oriental Studies

Academic Year 2017-18

Version 1. 21/11/2017

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2017/Final Honour School in Michaelmas Term 2019. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

NOTE: The Examination Regulations relating to all Oriental Studies courses are available at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations, you should always follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact academic.administrator@orinst.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as of November 10th 2017. It may, however, be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances. If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes. Students will also be informed.

Preliminary Examination (First Year)

Passing Prelims at the end of the first year represents a significant stage in your study of Chinese. In terms of the modern language, it marks the point at which you have covered the whole range of basic grammar and begun your experience of reading original material in modern Chinese. You have made a start in formulating what you need to say in spoken Chinese. By this point, you have an active vocabulary of 900 characters and approximately 1,500 lexical items; your passive vocabulary is larger than this. In Classical Chinese, you know the basic structures and features of the language used in prose writings just before and just after the dawn of the imperial age, and have begun to read original texts. And you have also studied the history and civilisation of pre-modern China, both in broad terms and through closer examination of particular themes. All this constitutes the basic kit which you will need to equip you for the more serious work to come.

You will be studying for the three papers below:

1. Modern
2. Classical
3. East Asia Survey: China

Second Year: Your Year Abroad

Having passed Prelims at the end of the first year, you will then spend the second year of your course studying at Beijing Daxue (Peking University). This will give you contact with Chinese life and Chinese people at a point when you are just about ready to encounter them in their own language: by going to China at this stage you will get much more value from the experience. You will return to Oxford with greater confidence, some real fluency in speaking the language, and a much clearer sense of what you want to do in the second part of the course.

While at Peking University, you are still Oxford students and as such will be expected to attend classes, do work and sit collections as you would at Oxford. Your Modern Chinese classes will be organised by Peking University and details of those will be provided to you upon arrival at the university. Details regarding what is expected of you for Classical Chinese and History and Civilisation are included below.

You will be given two briefing sessions and detailed guidance on matters of official paperwork, costs, and general preparation for this period of overseas study in your first year. Victor and William Fung Foundation scholarships are available for support of tuition fees and to assist with living expenses in China. Information about these scholarships will be provided in Trinity Term of your first year. For anyone without sufficient resources to cope with the remaining costs whilst abroad, there are other expedients available: some colleges will help with travel grants, and the China Centre has a small number of hardship travel scholarships, derived from trust funds run by the university.

Classical Chinese

At the end of the first year, you will have mastered the basic grammar and vocabulary of Classical Chinese and had a chance to apply your knowledge on selections of various texts as you prepared for your Prelims. From this point onwards, exposure to texts, the building of a vocabulary and practice of the skills developed in the first year are what you will need to move forward in Classical Chinese and

prepare yourself for working with material in your third and fourth years.

Classical Chinese in the second year will involve working on a variety of set texts included in the material that you will obtain before you leave for Beijing. These include “*Dao zhi*” of the *Zhuangzi* and “*Shi guo*” of the *Hanfeizi*, which you will begin in your first year, and selections from the *Shiji*, the *Guwen guanzhi* and a selection of poetry. Unlike what you saw before where the texts you had were extracts from larger passages, now you are supplied with complete texts taken from editions of works which would be used by scholars. These texts have been carefully selected to provide you with well-known texts that a student at your level is able to tackle.

In addition to two hours a week of Classical instruction provided by Beijing Daxue and some additional material provided to you via Weblearn, you will be expected to engage in more independent work than in your first year and will be expected to work on the assigned set texts in your own time. You will have collections devoted to these set texts at the start of your second term of your second year and Michaelmas Term of your third year.

History and Civilisation

During your first year, you will have taken part in tutorials and attended lectures where you studied topics over the wide swath of history in China. During your second year, you will write four essays that are mostly related to your stay in China. The two essays before Christmas will bring you into a museum and into contact with local popular culture. The two essays after Christmas will be your first steps in engaging with local Chinese people in order to write about their personal history (or histories) and their lives in China today.

While at Beijing Daxue, you will have access to the university libraries which house a large collection of secondary material in many languages. Through your Oxford Single Sign On and a VPN with Oxford University, you will also have access to all the electronic databases and journals (e.g. Solo, JStor) to which Oxford subscribes. As you will not have lectures or tutorials, these will be your main resources in studying the topics assigned.

You will be provided with reading lists and essay topics electronically (via Weblearn) during your two terms at Beijing Daxue. You will be expected to produce two essays per term. We have set separate times for handing in the essays, because some of them involve actual fieldwork. Please keep to the set dates, in order to allow us to provide proper supervision and help. All of these essays are obligatory in the same way as the various classes and the collections that you attend.

Final Honour School (Third and Fourth Year)

The syllabus comes in three main parts:

1. a core of compulsory papers in Modern (including oral) and Classical Chinese, plus an essay paper on Modern China;
2. two options, with a choice between focusing on an aspect of Chinese Studies (modern literature and film, history, early philosophy, art et cetera) and taking a single subsidiary language (Korean, Japanese, or Tibetan);

3. an extended essay, based on primary sources on a topic set by your supervisor and related to the option you have chosen as your third-year option.
4. a dissertation, where the choice of topic lies entirely with the student and may vary from a linguistic analysis of internet language to a close study of newly discovered ancient texts or from the contemporary art market to the green movement in Hong Kong.

Chinese	Chinese with a Subsidiary Language
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modern Chinese I. 2. Modern Chinese II. 3. Oral. 4. Classical I. 5. Classical II. 6. Modern China. 7. Dissertation 8. Special Option I: Texts and Essays 9. Special Option II: Texts and Essays 10. Special Option III: Extended Essay. This will be in the same area as that chosen in Special Option 1 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modern Chinese I. 2. Modern Chinese II. 3. Oral. 4. Classical I. 5. Classical II. 6. Modern China 7. Dissertation <p>Subsidiary language</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Japanese, Korean or Tibetan Texts (Subsidiary). 1. Japanese, Korean or Tibetan History and Culture (Subsidiary). 2. Japanese, Korean or Tibetan Language (Subsidiary).

Special Options

- China and the World I (not available in 2017 – 2018)
- China and the World II
- Chinese Ceramics
- Chinese Law and Society (not available in 2017 – 2018)
- Painters on Painting
- Myth of Confucian Classics
- Social History of China: Orality and Textuality
- Women and Writing in Republican China

Teaching Staff

The following list gives Faculty and College affiliations of those members of staff whose classes and tutorials you are likely to attend in the Institute.

- Prof Robert Chard, Associate Professor of Classical Chinese (St Anne's College) (On leave in Trinity term)
- Prof Matthew Erie, Associate Professor of Modern Chinese Studies
- Ms Jing Fang, Instructor in Chinese (University College)
- Dr Christopher Forster, Junior Research Fellow (Pembroke College)

- Prof Barend ter Haar, Run Run Shaw Professor of Chinese (University College)
- Prof Henrietta Harrison, Professor of Modern Chinese History (Pembroke College) (On leave in Michaelmas and Hilary terms)
- Prof Margaret Hillenbrand, Associate Professor of Modern Chinese Literature and Culture (Wadham College)
- Ms Bo Hu, Instructor in Chinese (The Queen's College)
- Mr Shio-yun Kan, Senior Instructor in Modern Chinese (Wadham College)
- Prof Dirk Meyer, Associate Professor of Chinese Philosophy (The Queen's College)
- Ms Yang Song, Shaw Instructor in Chinese (St Hilda's College)
- Mrs Shelagh Vainker, Associate Professor of Chinese Art (part-time) (St Hugh's College)

Compulsory Subjects

Year 1: Modern Chinese

Course description:

The textbook we use to introduce our students to all aspects of basic modern Chinese grammar is Practical Chinese Reader, Books I-II, Beijing 1981. Although more than 30 years old, this textbook still offers one of the most thorough introductions to Chinese grammar. In addition to grammar classes and language tutorials that focus on writing and reading skills, in the first year you will also have oral classes in small groups, plus three hours a week in the language lab perfecting pronunciation, fluency, and listening skills. The goal here is to enable you to communicate effectively in given situations and to familiarise you with a Chinese language environment. The spoken, written, and writing elements all reinforce one another and are examined at Prelims in a written and an oral paper.

The written exam will require you to translate English sentences into modern Chinese, with systematic use of both abbreviated (simplified) and unabbreviated (unsimplified or traditional) script. There will also be a passage in Chinese to test your comprehension and a grammar question in which you will be asked to explain the characteristics of given sentences.

Spoken Chinese The oral examination is conducted in two parts: a comprehension test conducted in groups (c. 25 minutes), and an individual test (c. 25 minutes).

In the comprehension test, you will hear a passage or passages lasting up to five minutes and read twice by a native speaker or speakers. You will be allowed 10 minutes to give written evidence in English that you have understood the material.

In the individual test, you will be required to read aloud a short passage in Chinese selected from texts that you have prepared during your course of study. You will then be asked to answer a few questions based on the text. After this, you will be required to conduct a short conversation in Chinese with the Moderators in an imagined situation.

Year 1: Classical Chinese

Term in which it is taught and hours of teaching:

MT, HT, and TT; 3 hours per week

Teaching staff:

R.L. Chard (TT: TBA)

Course description:

This paper tests work covered during the first year on two set books: R.L. Chard, ed., "Selected Texts in Classical Chinese" (copies available in the China Centre office) and R.S. Dawson, *A New Introduction to Classical Chinese*, Oxford 1984, which can be purchased online or borrowed from your college library.

You will be expected to produce translations from the prescribed passages, to give diagrammatic analysis of the structure of selected sentences, and to translate short pieces of unseen text.

The preparation for this paper is done in classes. The Classical Chinese language is presented systematically, much as a modern language might be taught for reading knowledge. The aim is to develop genuine reading ability and to provide exposure to significant classical texts as quickly as possible, while at the same time assisting the study of Modern Chinese, in particular through the intensive acquisition of commonly used characters and basic morphological structures. Early lessons introduce basic vocabulary and grammar, reinforced through reading exercises consisting of individual sentences from Classical Chinese texts. In the second and third terms longer passages are read, the majority from the *Han Feizi* and the *Mengzi*). Much of the third term is spent working on a wide range of unseen texts.

Year 1: East Asia Survey: China**Term in which it is taught and hours of teaching:**

MT, HT, and TT; lectures and 4 tutorial hours per term

Teaching staff:

various

Course description:

This paper covers aspects of Chinese society past and present, including religious practices, political culture, social and economic history, literature and philosophy. You will write three essays chosen from a total of eight to ten questions. Preparation for this paper begins in Michaelmas Term of the first year and continues throughout the year. Students attend the East Asian Survey lecture series and explore many of the subjects covered in the fortnightly tutorial essay.

FHS: Modern Chinese prose composition and Unprepared translation from Modern Chinese**Course description:**

These two papers are based on a functional, rather than literary, approach to the language and will be taught throughout the third and fourth years. The prose composition paper is intended to help you develop your active vocabulary and ability to express yourself in written Chinese. In the final exam you will both translate from English into Chinese and write a piece of connected Chinese prose in your own words. The translation paper is designed to reflect training in reading expository and discursive writing, including newspaper styles. In the final examination your skill in translating the Chinese language as it appears in current publications in China and Taiwan and/or Hong Kong will be examined.

Spoken Chinese is an oral test in two parts. In the first, a listening comprehension test, you will hear a

passage read out by a native speaker and give written evidence in English that you have understood it. In the second, an individual test, you will first be asked to talk on a chosen subject, and then, finally, to interpret between a Chinese speaker and an English speaker. Three distinct and important skills are exercised here: understanding sustained passages of spoken Chinese; formulating your own thoughts in the language at some length; and negotiating two-way communication on behalf of other people. The language teaching offered through the third and fourth years will prepare you specifically in each of those skills.

FHS Spoken Chinese is weighted as half a paper.

FHS: Classical Chinese I

Course description:

This is a translation and short essay question paper. It is devoted to texts that would have formed part of the cultural capital of literate persons in pre-modern China. Reading these texts will thus familiarise the student with many of the concepts, conventions and ideas common to Chinese culture, while also improving their ability to read and work with Classical Chinese.

Preparation for this paper will begin in the third year with the reading of select passages of the *Zhuangzi*. The imagery and ideas presented in this text are so well known to later generations that this text is central to the Chinese experience and inherently worth reading for its own sake.

In the fourth year, students will continue their preparation for this paper by selecting from one of two options as listed below. These options are subject to the availability of specialists in that field and thus will not all be offered every year. Students will be expected to be responsible for the material covered in only the option they select.

1. Classical Chinese Philosophy will be a translation and short essay question paper. You will look at passages from texts from the formative period of the Chinese intellectual tradition. The arguments and ideas in the set texts have long provoked debate and discussion in the intellectual and political world of China.
2. Classical Chinese Historiography will be a translation and short essay question paper. You will look at passages selected from the Western Han Dynasty text the *Shiji*. One of the first histories of China, this text not only sets the pattern for all subsequent histories and marks the beginning of the historiographic tradition of China, but the episodes and stories it contains have also been enjoyed as literature in their own right being well recounted and discussed even today.

FHS: Classical Chinese II

Course description:

This paper takes an approach different from Classical Chinese I. It comes from a recognition that this language was the medium through which all our knowledge of China's past has been transmitted to the present and focuses on narrative as the primary reading skill. Certain texts will be prescribed and taught in class through the third year. These may vary from year to year but will focus on historical documents and stories of a personal nature, for example, Kong Shangren's account of how he met the Kangxi emperor; a memoir by a Korean envoy who visited Beijing in the 18th century, and tales of encounters with the supernatural. All are fresh, immediate narratives of first-hand experience, displaying the precision and versatility of Classical Chinese as a narrative medium and providing us with rare insights

into the lives of people in late imperial China. Against this background, the paper will also test unprepared translation from similar narrative texts. Preparation for unprepared translation also begins in the third year and continues throughout the fourth year.

FHS: Modern China

Course description:

This is an interdisciplinary course which builds on the first-year East Asia Survey as well as your first-hand experience of China during the second year abroad. Extending from the late imperial era to the present, its aim is to look beneath the surface of contemporary China and to examine the events, influences, debates and ideas that have made China what it is today. The topics covered range from the construction of ethnicity, through political participation and dissent to the contemporary cultural scene and human rights. The course is taught in a series of lectures and tutorials spread over the third year and part of the fourth year, and it is examined with an essay paper at Finals. It is expected that you will begin reading for this course soon after Prelims and continue into the fourth year.

Special Subjects

China and the World II

Teaching staff:

Hannah Theaker

Course description:

This option will deal with major themes in China's recent international relations from a historical and cultural perspective. The first term's texts will focus on China's relations with Southeast Asia and particularly the ethnic Chinese communities resident there and their relations with the Chinese state going back to the early twentieth century, but also covering more recent events and tensions. The second term's texts will be about China's international relations since the 1980s, covering the US, Japan and Africa. The focus will be on the growth of Chinese nationalism and China's interaction with concepts such as human rights that form the foundation of many international institutions.

Set texts will be selected for their relevance to the topics covered, with the objective of introducing students to different styles of primary sources commonly used by students of modern and contemporary China. These will mostly be in modern Chinese. The genres covered will include gazetteers, genealogies, policy documents, and academic articles.

Ceramics

Teaching staff:

Professor Shelagh Vainker

Course description:

In the Song dynasty, ceramics were one of China's largest industries, and from the Ming dynasty to the 19th century China dominated the world in porcelain production. This option looks at the history of ceramics in China – their manufacture, sale, circulation and appreciation – through various types of

texts. Beginning with poems inspired by teawares in the Song dynasty, through connoisseurship and collecting in the Yuan and Ming to imperial inscriptions and technological treatises in the Qing, the course will trace the significance of ceramics in Chinese art and industry.

In conjunction with texts and secondary reading, works from the Ashmolean Museum's very rich collections of 10th-20th- century ceramics will be viewed, providing a direct as well as theoretical and critical understanding of art in China

Painters on Painting

Teaching staff:

Professor Shelagh Vainker

Course description:

In China painters have written about painting for as long as ink paintings have been produced – about 1500 years. They continue to do so in the 21st century, and this option will look at art theory and practice as discussed by a small number of Song dynasty painters and by numerous artists active between the Republican period and the present day. These will include Pan Tianshou writing in the 1920s about Western influences on Chinese art, to Xu Bing in 2012 on the relationship between landscape painting and Chinese script. Through reading these essays students will learn about both the processes of individual artistic practice, and the range of possible relationships between art, society and politics.

In conjunction with texts and secondary reading, works from the Ashmolean Museum's very rich collection of modern Chinese paintings and prints will be viewed, providing a direct as well as theoretical and critical understanding of art in modern China.

Women and Writing in Republican China

Teaching staff:

Professor Margaret Hillenbrand

Course description:

This option investigates the relationship between women and writing in Republican China through the linked prisms of class, war, revolution, and emerging media technologies. Gender relations during the Republican era underwent huge shifts in the public and private domains, and literary practice both reflected and shaped these changes. Students will translate a set of paradigmatic short stories by female writers in class, while the tutorial component of the option focuses on the critical interpretation of these works, with regular recourse to theories of gender as they apply to the Chinese context. In our tutorials, we will also explore how gender is articulated in various forms of visual culture from the period. Third- and fourth-year students are taught together, in both classes and tutorials.

Myth of the Confucian Classics in the Warring States Period

Teaching staff:

Professor Dirk Meyer

Course description:

The myth that the Confucian Classics had a strong literary presence during the Warring states period underlies ancient and modern thinking. This has been the case ever since the early foundations of the Chinese empire under the Qin and the Han. Today, 'Ancient Confucian Classics' inform the politico-philosophical positions of Chinese intellectuals, especially in the context of a revival of Confucianism and 'National Studies' (*guo xue*) in China, as well as in North American and Chinese New-Confucian (*Xin Rujia*) movements. This option focuses on the Classics during the formative period of Chinese philosophical enterprise, the Warring States period, by looking at the Classics from four different angles.

First, we will investigate how texts that came to us through the transmission process refer to the ancient Classics to construct their arguments. Second, we will look at how excavated texts construct philosophical ideas by reference to these sources. Third, we will look at the purportedly ancient Classics themselves. This will be done in two ways. One is to look at the canonised works themselves; the other is to look at excavated texts that contain elements that seem to correspond with the Classics. Lastly, we will approach the issue of the Classics during the Warring States period in theoretical terms in our tutorials. Here we read secondary literature that deals with wider questions of canon and canonisation, literacy and orality, cultural memory and foundational past, as well as textual communities and knowledge transmission in early societies.

It is true that many thinkers of the Warring States period (circa 453–221 BC) base their arguments on the Classics, be it Kongzi (Confucius), Mengzi (Mencius) or Xunzi. Even 'heterodox' thinkers such as Mozi and Zhuangzi refer to the 'Ancient Classics' to buttress their arguments, mostly the *Documents* and the *Odes*, but direct reference to Confucius as we know him through the *Lunyu* can be found everywhere too. Especially today, the 'ancient Confucius' crucially informs New-Confucianism in China, as well as in North America.

In this option, students will apply hermeneutical strategies that allow them to comprehend forms of meaning construction in early texts. Students will further encounter ancient politico-philosophical strategies that are surprisingly modern, and they will engage with intellectual claims about the past in critical terms. This text-based approach, as well as the theoretical readings, will enable students to understand ancient and modern philosophical activities in new terms.

Third- and fourth-year students are taught together, in both classes and tutorials. Students will translate texts in class, although they will be encouraged to read beyond this material. The tutorial component of the option focuses on the critical interpretation of these works and secondary material related to these subjects.

China and the World I (not available 2017-2018)**Teaching staff:**

Professor Henrietta Harrison (on leave in MT and HT 2017–2018)

Course description:

This option will examine China's engagement with the world from a variety of perspectives and disciplinary approaches. From the 18th Century through to 1949. It will look not only at the major events that shaped China's encounter with the wider world, but at the role of missionaries, traders, diplomats, and intellectuals in the transmission of culture and ideas. The impact and consequences of

this transmission will be studied at local and national level, as will China’s interaction with and isolation from the outside world. Themes will include the role of wars in shaping Chinese politics and culture; trade and the transmission of science, technology and beliefs; the radical intellectual and social changes that shaped the revolutions of the 20th century.

Set texts will be selected for their relevance to the topics covered, with the objective of introducing students to different styles of primary sources commonly used by historians of modern China. These will range in terms of language, from the classical to the vernacular, and will include official documentary sources, diaries, travel accounts, and reportage.

Orality and Textuality in Chinese culture

Teaching staff:

Professor Barend J. ter Haar

Course description:

In our own culture the textual has become increasingly dominant and even the oral, for instance in a public lecture or a telephone call, has become subject to rules developed for writing. The history of the oral versus the textual in Chinese culture still needs to be written, not in the least because of the myth that the written has always dominated the oral. What is stressed is always the early invention of the Chinese writing system, rather than asking questions about the evolving and ever changing contexts of and uses for writing. The oral dimension of Chinese culture is associated with popular or folk culture, or even primarily with “minority” culture, which may or may not sometimes be true today, but certainly was not in the slightly more distant past. In two series of classes (each covering one term) we will investigate a variety of issues under the overall themes of “Oral transmission and oral legitimacy” and “Spoken language in traditional China”. We will pay attention to the issues involved, but also read relevant sources with an eye on exposing you to broad variety of styles of writing, ranging from bureaucratic and literary to religious genres. You may, like your teacher, not become an expert in anything but you will certainly get a good idea of what is out there in terms of sources and how to get different kinds of information from these sources. Since our problematic is cross-disciplinary, we will cover a large part of China’s history including the early twentieth century.

Assessment

The latest information on assessments and submission details is listed in the University of Oxford Examination Regulations and can be found here: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>

The Exam Regulations are revised and re-issued each year, and you must always consult the relevant issue in force. For example, if you matriculate your studies in Michaelmas Term 2017, for Prelims examinations you should refer to the Examination Regulations for 2017 -2018. For FHS examinations depending on the programme, please see the below:

Year of Matriculation	Prelims Exams	FHS Exams	
		3-year programme	4-year programme
MT 2017	Prelims Exam Regs 2017-18	FHS Exam Regs 2018-19	FHS Exam Regs 2019-20

Important Deadlines

Wk 8 of Trinity Term	Year 1	Spoken examination for the First Public Examinations.
Monday Wk 9 of Trinity Term	Year 1	Provisional start date of the First Public Examinations.
12 noon, Monday Wk 0 of Hilary Term	Year 4	Deadline for submission of dissertation titles for Faculty Board approval.
12 noon, Friday Wk 10 of Hilary Term	Year 4	Deadline for submission of dissertation. Dissertations should be submitted to Exam Schools.
Wk 0 of Trinity Term	Year 4	Spoken examination for Chinese language. Timetables available about 5 weeks before the oral exams.
12 noon, Friday Wk 8 of Michaelmas Term	Year 4	Deadline for submission of Special Option III: Extended Essays. Extended essays should be submitted to Exam Schools.
Monday Wk 7 of Trinity Term	Year 4	Provisional start date of the Final Honour School examinations.