Classical Chinese Grammar Tutorial[*]
Lesson 3: Compound Verbal Predicates

Julio Song

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Language points:

- Verbal conjunctions

- Auxiliary verbs

- Quasi auxiliaries

- Coverbs

New historical sources:

- *Síng Lì Tsīng Ngí* (性理精義) 'The Essential Meaning of Human Nature and Heavenly Principles' (SL)

- *Mek Tsì* (墨子) 'Writings of Master Mek' (MkTs)

- *Lǜ Ssí Č'ūn Ts'ieū* (呂氏春秋) 'Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals' (LSs)

- *Č'ūn Ts'ieū Kūng Yâng Čuén* (春秋公羊傳) 'Kūng Yâng Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals' (KYČ)

- *Kuok Iǜ* (國語) 'Discourses of the States' (KI)

1 Complex predicates via conjunctions

Sinitic languages tend to use different conjunctions for different categories. Classical Chinese is no exception. In Chapter 5 of Pulleyblank's textbook, we meet a conjunction for verbs—and especially for the subclass of verbs labeled "adjectives"—*ʔsa* (且 [且]). But overt conjunctions are usually only optional in Classical Chinese.

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[*]The full series is available on my website (`www.juliosong.com`).

(1) a. 邦𤣥𧸘貧且賤𨒍唑𤣥邦𣎺𧸘富且賢𨒍唑𤣥
邦有道貧且賤焉恥也邦蕪道富且貴焉恥也 (LI)

proːŋ	*ɢʷuʔ*	*lʼuːʔ,*	**brun**	**ʔsa**	**zlens**	*qan*	*ŋ̊ʰɯʔ*	*laːlʔ;*	*proːŋ*	*ma*	*lʼuːʔ,*
pāng	yeù	taò,	p'ín	ts'iè	tsién	yên	č'ì	yè;	pāng	wû	taò,
country	have	Way	poor	and	lowly	in it	shameful	AST	country	not have	Way

pugs	**ʔsa**	**kluds**	*qan*	*ŋ̊ʰɯʔ*	*laːlʔ*
fú	ts'iè	kuéi	yên	č'ì	yè
rich	and	noble	in it	shameful	AST

'When a country has the Way, to be poor and lowly in it is shameful; when a country does not have the Way, to be rich and noble in it is shameful.' (PB:39)

b. 𩏩白𩠶𣎺負𢧐亏𧸘踚鷺
頒白者不負戴于道路矣 (MTs)

praːn	*braːg*	*tjaːʔ*	*puʼ*	**buʔ**	**ʔlʼɯːgs**	*ɢʷa*	*lʼuːʔ*	*ɡ·raːgs*	*ɢluʔ*
pān	pek	čè	put	fú	tái	iǖ	taò	lú	ì
variegated	white	NMLZ	NEG	back-carry	head-carry	on	way	road	PRF

'Those whose hair is streaked with white will not carry loads on their heads or on their backs on the ways and roads.' (PB:39)

In (1a), we see two *ʔsa*-conjoined coordinate predicates, '(be) poor and lowly' and '(be) rich and noble', but the sentence is also fine without *ʔsa*. In (1b), we see a conjunction-free coordinate predicate 'carry (weight) on the head [and] carry (weight) on the back'. Since it is embedded in a negative context, the covert conjunction is translated as "or.".

In the same chapter, we meet another verbal conjunction, *njɯ* (帀 [而]), which is mainly used in verb/event serialization. While verbs conjoined by *ʔsa* have no internal semantic order, verbs/events connected by *njɯ* may assume one of several conventionalized semantic orders, such as temporal precedence, quasi-modificational simultaneity, etc. In addition, conjuncts linked by *njɯ* may be either bare verbs, verb phrases, or full clauses (which are extended VPs in a technical sense). Overall, *njɯ* is a highly versatile conjunction in Classical Chinese, and the various semantic relations it conveys are a key pedagogical point in high school grammar.

(2) a. 臘夂火煮世呂戕㞢楚鍋宋而見孟呂
          滕文公爲世子將之楚過宋而見孟子 (MTs)

    l'ɯːŋ   mun   kloːŋ   ɢʷal   hljebs   ʔsluʔ, ʔsaŋ   tjɯ sŋ̥ʰraʔ, kloːls sluːŋs, njɯ keːns

    tĕng   wên kūng wêi   ší   tsǐ   tsiāng čī ts'ù   kuó   sóng rǐ̂   kién

    T'ĕng Wên duke be   generation son   will   go Ts'ù   pass Sóng and meet

      mraːŋs ʔsluʔ

      méng   tsǐ̂

      Méng   master

    'When Duke Wên of T'ĕng was Crown Prince, he passed through Sóng on his way to Ts'ù and saw Mencius (lit. he was going to Ts'ù, [but after hearing that Mencius was in Sóng at the moment] passed through Sòng on his way, and met Mencius).'

                                                        (PB:45)

    b. 日凹而作日人而息逍遙于天地㞢間而心意自得
          日出而作日入而息逍遙于天地之間而心意自得 (ČTs)

    *njig kʰljud **njɯ** ʔsaːgs, njig njub **njɯ** slug; sew-lew   ɢʷa qʰl'iːn l'els*

    žit č'ut   rǐ̂   tsok, žit žip   rǐ̂   sik, siaō-yaô   iǖ   t'iēn tí

    sun exit   and   work sun enter and rest free and unfettered in heaven earth

      *tjɯ kreːn **njɯ** slɯm qugs ɦljids tɯːg*

      čī   kiān   rǐ̂   sīm   í   tsǐ́   tek

      GEN middle and heart mind self   obtain

    'The sun rises and I work; the sun sets and I rest. I freely enjoy myself between heaven and earth and my mind is self-satisfied.'   (vdG:254)

In (2a), *njɯ* indicates a temporal order between 'pass through Sóng' and 'meet Mencius'. In (2b), the first two occurrences of *njɯ* indicate quasi-modificational simultaneity, where the first conjunct 'the sun rises' describes a background condition of the second conjunct 'I work' in an quasi-adverbial (so this could be more freely translated as 'I work at sunrise'). The third *njɯ*, on the other hand, conjoins two clauses in a natural narrative order; that is, it indicates the normal expansion of the discourse.

Finally, it is worth noting that when *njɯ* does not indicate ordinary temporal precedence but indicates some more abstract semantic or narrative order, the first conjunct can sometimes be an auxiliary verb, as in (3).

(3) a. 其能而亂四方
其能而亂四方 (Šū)

gu **nɯ:** **nju** *ro:ns* *hljids* *paŋ*
k'î nêng rî̌ luén ssî̌ fāng
how.ᴇᴍᴘʜ capable and govern four quarter

'How could I be capable of governing the kingdom? (lit. how could I be capable and govern the kingdom)' (vdG:257)

b. 盛德之士君不得而臣父不得而子
盛德之士君不得而臣父不得而子 (MTs)

djeŋs *tɯ:g* *tju* *zrɯʔ,* *klun* *pɯ'* **tɯ:g** **nju** *giŋ,* *baʔ* *pɯ'* **tɯ:g**
šéng tek čī ssî̌, kiǖn put tek rî̌ č'în, fú put tek
grand virtue ɢᴇɴ scholar ruler not get ᴄᴏɴᴊ treat as subject father not get

nju *ʔslɯʔ?*
rî̌ tsî̌
ᴄᴏɴᴊ treat as son

'As for a scholar of grand virtue, a ruler does not get to (lit. does not succeed and) treat him as a subject, and a father does not get to treat him as a son.' (PB:46)

The literal meanings 'be capable and do sth.' in (3a) and 'succeed and do sth.' in (3b) are more naturally rendered 'be capable of doing sth.' and 'get/manage to do sth.' respectively. The compatibility of auxiliary verbs like *nɯ:* 'can, capable of' and *tɯ:g* 'get to, manage to' and the verb-serializing conjunction *nju* suggests that they still keep some lexicality in Classical Chinese, unlike their counterparts in English.

2   Auxiliary verbs

The internal structure of complex predicates could be either coordination or subordination. Coordination, as we have seen, is the simpler case between the two, while subordination is more complicated, because both the subordinating and the subordinate component may vary in their grammatical status.

In view of the subordinating component, there are two main types of subordinate complex predicates: those with auxiliary verbs and those with coverbs. We begin by looking at the first type. Pulleyblank and von der Gabelentz collectively teach the following auxiliaries (I use this term in a broad sense, meaning any VP-selecting [+V] morpheme):

- *log* (縣[欲]) / *ŋʷans* (願[願]) 'wish, want, would like to'

- *nɯ:* (㤟 [能]) / *kʰɯ:g* (亨 [克]) 'can, may, be capable of'

- *ta:ŋ* (當 [當]) 'should'

- *kʰɯ:ŋʔ* (肯 [肯]) 'be willing to'

- *kla:mʔ* (敢 [敢]) 'dare; venture to'

- *hljɯʔ* (� [始]) 'begin to, start to'

- *tɯ:g* (㥁[得]) 'get to, manage to'

As their English translations show, the counterparts of these words tend to be auxiliaries in other languages too. Since the concept "auxiliary" is not hard to understand, our main task here is just to learn these vocabulary items.

A. *log/ŋʷans* 'wish, want, would like to'

(4) a. 欲辟土坤
欲辟土地 (Mts)

log	*beg*		*l̥ʰa:ʔ*	*l'els*
yuk	p'ik		t'ù	tí
want	open up (territory)		earth	ground

'(You) want to enlarge your territory.'   (vdG:133)

   b. 願藏亏其巿
願藏于其市 (Mts)

ŋʷans	*za:ŋ*	*ɢʷa*	*gu*	*djɯʔ*
yuén	ts'áng	iǖ	k'î	šì
wish	store up	on	his	market

'(Traders) wish to do business (lit. store up goods) on his market.'   (vdG:133)

Just like English *want* and *wish*, the two desire-denoting auxiliaries in Classical Chinese can be used as ordinary lexical verbs as well.

(5) 王欲㞢
王欲之

ɢʷaŋ	***log***	*tjɯ*
wâng	yuk	čī
king	wish	it

'The king wishes it.'   (PB:40)

B. *nɯ:/kʰɯ:g* 'can, may, be capable of'

(6) a. 〔seal script〕
汝能庸命 (Šū)

njaʔ **nɯː** *loŋ* *mreŋs*
žù nêng yûng míng
you capable use destiny

'You are capable of following God's will. (lit. using the destiny)' (vdG:133)

b. 〔seal script〕
允恭克讓 (Šū)

lunʔ *kloŋ* **kʰɯːg** *njaŋs*
yǔn kūng kʼek yáng
honest respectful can give way

'He is honest, respectful, and modest (lit. can give way to others).' (vdG:133)

Both auxiliaries in (6) work in the same way as their English counterparts, meaning 'sb. can do sth.'. There are still other words conveying this meaning in Classical Chinese, such as *kʰaːlʔ* (ㄎ [可]). Nevertheless, this synonymous item assumes a different syntax, so we leave it to the next section. Note that *nɯː* can be used as an ordinary lexical verb in its modal sense too, just like *log* in (5).

(7) 〔seal script〕
不賢而能之與 (MTs)

pɯ' *giːn* *njɯ* **nɯː** *tjɯ* *la*
put kiên rî̌ nêng čī iǔ
not talented and capable it Q

'Could he have done it if he had not been a man of superior talent? (lit. Is it true that he is not talented but is capable of it?)' (PB:40)

C. *taːŋ* 'should'

(8) a. 〔seal script〕
故言理之當先乎氣 (SL)

kaːs *ŋan* *rɯʔ* *tjɯ* **taːŋ** *sɯːns* *ɢaː* *kʰɯds*
kú yên lì čī tāng siēn hû kʼí
therefore say principle GEN should come before than matter

'Therefore, we say that principles should come before matter.' (vdG:454)

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b. 𐊼𐊼𐊼 𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼 (tangut script)

此非人臣所當議也 (SsK)

sheʔ	*puɯ*	*njin*	*giŋ*	*sqʰraʔ*	***ta:ŋ***	*ŋrals*	*la:lʔ*
ts'ǐ	fēi	žîn	č'în	sò	tāng	ngì	yè
this	not	people	subject	REL	should	discuss	AST

'This is not something that (feudal) officials should talk about.'

The word *ta:ŋ* has several meanings of different syntactic categories. Here, we are only concerned with its normal auxiliary meaning—namely, the meaning that can be directly translated as "should." We will see one of its other uses in the next section. Also note that unlike the other auxiliary verbs we have seen so far, this item is often used in a generic, impersonal way.

(9) 𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼 (tangut script)

言人之不善當如後患何 (Mts)

ŋan	*njin*	*tjɯ*	*pu'*	*gjenʔ,*	***ta:ŋ***	*nja*	*ɢo:ʔ*	*gro:ns*	*ga:l*
yên	žîn	čī	put	šén,	tāng	žû	heú	huán	hô
say	people	GEN	not	good	should	make be like	later	trouble	what

'If one often speaks ill of others, how should he deal with the ensuing trouble (lit. what should he make later trouble be like)?' (vdG:454)

Here, the speaker (Mencius) is making a general remark about the consequences of badmouthing, and there is no specific subject for either 'speak' or 'should deal with'.

D. *kʰɯ:ŋʔ* 'be willing to'

(10) a. 𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼𐊼 (tangut script)

終風且霾惠然肯來 (Šī)

tjuŋ		*plum*	*ʔsa*	*mrɯ:,*	*ɢʷi:ds*	*njen*	***kʰɯ:ŋʔ***	*m·rɯ:g*
čūng		fūng	ts'iè	mâi,	hoéi	žân	kèn	lâi
long-lasting		wind	and	cloud of dust	kind	ADV	willing to	come

'The wind blows for a whole day with clouds of dust; he is kindly willing to come to see me.'

b. 公子欲見兩人兩人自匿不肯見公子 (SsK)

klo:ŋ ʔsluʔ log ke:ns raŋʔ njin, raŋʔ njin ɦljids nug, pu' kʰɯ:ŋʔ ke:ns
kūng tsì̀ yuk kién rí̌ žîn, rí̌ žîn tsí̌ nik put kèn kién
lord son want meet two person two person self hide not willing.to meet

  klo:ŋ ʔsluʔ
  kūng tsì̀
  lord son

'The young lord (i.e., Lord Sín Lîng) wanted to meet the two people, but they hid themselves and were not willing to meet him.'

The use of this auxiliary is quite straightforward and in fact identical to its use in Modern Chinese. By the way, Lord Sín Lîng is one of the Four (Young) Lords of the Warring States (*čán kuok ssí̌ kūng tsì̀* 戰國四公子), of whom there are many famous stories.

E. *kla:mʔ* 'dare; venture to'

(11) 彼惡敢當我哉 (MTs)

*pralʔ qa:g **kla:mʔ** ta:ŋ ŋa:lʔ ʔslu:*
pì ngū kàm tāng ngò tsāi
he how dare withstand me SFP

'How dare he face me?'   (PB:40)

Note that the occurrence of *ta:ŋ* here is not an auxiliary but an ordinary lexical verb. In addition, while the *kla:mʔ* in (11) is equivalent to English *dare*, elsewhere in the language it has developed a further (grammaticalized) function—as an honorific marker meaning 'venture to do sth.' or 'do sth. with awe'. This use is mostly (if not exclusively) seen when the subject is first-person.

(12) 敢對揚天子之休命 (Šū)

***kla:mʔ** tu:bs laŋ qʰlʼi:n ʔsluʔ tju qʰu mreŋs*
kàm túi yâng tʼiēn tsì̀ čī hieū míng
dare respond praise heaven son GEN magnificent order

'Full of awe, I respond to and praise the emperor's magnificent order.'

From this function was derived the idiomatic phrase *kla:mʔ muns* 敢問 [敢問] 'I venture to ask…, may I ask…', which is still in use in Modern Chinese for rhetoric purposes.

F. *hljuʔ* 'begin to, start to'

This is another multicategorial, polysemous word, and here we are only concerned with its auxiliary use as an inceptive aspect marker.

(13) 𪒠 𡗓 𢛳 𡥈 作亂
蚩尤惟始作亂 (Šū)

tʰju	*ɢʷɯ*	*ɢʷi*	***hljuʔ***	*ʔsaːgs*	*roːns*
čī	yeû	wêi	šì	tsok	luén
Čī	Yeû	COP	begin	do	rebellion

'Čī Yeû just began to rebel.'   (vdG:134)

G. *tɯːg* 'get to, manage to'

(14) a. 𥅛 𣦵 于此 弗 得 出矣
必死于此弗得出矣 (TsČ)

plig	*hljiʔ*	*ɢʷa*	*sheʔ,*	*pɯd*	***tɯːg***	*kʰljud*	*ɢlɯʔ*
pit	ssì	iǖ	tsì,	fut	tek	čut	ì
must	die	in	here	not	get.to	exit	PRF

'I am doomed to die here and will not get to escape.'   (vdG:458)

b. 善人吾不得 而 見 之矣 得見 有 恆者 斯可矣
善人吾不得而見之矣得見有恆者斯可矣 (LI)

gjenʔ	*njin,*	*ŋaː*	*puʔ*	***tɯːg***	*nju*	*keːns*	*tju*	*ɢlɯʔ;*	***tɯːg***	*keːns*	*ɢʷɯʔ*	*ɡɯːŋ*
šén	žìn,	ngû	put	tek	rî̂	kién	čī	ì;	tek	kién	yeù	hêng
good	person	I	not	get to	CONJ	meet	3SG	PRF	get to	meet	have	persistence

tjaːʔ,	*se*	*kʰaːlʔ*	*ɢlɯʔ*
če,	ssī̄	kò	ì
NMLZ	that	okay	PRF

'As for a good person, I will not get to meet one. Thus, as long as I get to meet someone with lasting integrity, that is already okay.'   (vdG:458)

Notice the insertion of the the verb-serializing conjunction *nju* in (14b), which we have encountered in the previous section.

3   Quasi auxiliaries

Apart from the above-mentioned modal and aspectual auxiliary verbs, Classical Chinese still has some other VP-selecting items that can help form complex predicates. These mainly include causative light verbs and "tough" adjectives. For convenience's sake, I call all these "quasi

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auxiliaries," because they are still clearly [+V] in categorial status and intuitively all modify or support the main verb in some way.

3.1 Causative light verbs

There are two main causative quasi auxiliaries in Classical Chinese: *sruʔ* (倳 [使]) 'lit. employ; send' and *re:ŋs* (令 [令]) 'lit. order'. Each of these has a lexical verb meaning, but that meaning is bleached in the causative construction, with only the abstract meaning 'make, let' being left. I give such vocabulary items the label "light verbs," borrowing a term from theoretical linguistics. Thus, the construction [v_{Caus} NP VP] systematically means 'make/let NP VP', where NP is both the object of the causative light verb and the subject of the main verb. For this reason, Pulleyblank calls this a "pivot construction."

(15) a. 是倳民養生䎃死無憾也
是使民養生喪死無憾也 (MTs)

djeʔ	**sruʔ**	*min*	*laŋʔ*	*shle:ŋ*	*sma:ŋ*	*hljiʔ*	*ma*	*gu:ms*	*la:lʔ*
ší	ssǐ	mîn	yàng	šēng	sāng	ssǐ	wû	hán	yè
this	CAUS	people	nourish	living	mourn	dead	not have	regret	AST

'This is to let the people nourish the living and mourn the dead without regrets.'

(PB:41)

b. 為元門二瓦屋毋令水潦能入門中
爲元門上瓦屋毋令水潦能入門中 (MkTs)

ɢʷals	gu	mɯ:n	djaŋʔ	ŋʷra:lʔ	qo:g,	ma	**re:ŋs**	qʰʷljilʔ	re:wʔ	nɯ:	njub	mɯ:n
wêi	k'î	mên	šáng	nguà	nguk,	wû	líng	šùi	nêng	žip	mên	čūng
for	its	gate	build	tile	room	not.IMP	let	water	flood	able	enter	gate

tuŋ

inside

'Build a tiled roof for its gate, so as not to let the flood waters be able to enter the gate.'

(PB:41)

3.2 "Tough" predicates

In an auxiliary verb construction [NP Aux V], NP is the subject of V. By contrast, in a "tough" construction [NP TOUGH V], NP is the logical object of V, and so the reading of the entire construction is somewhat passivized. This construction is known as the "tough" construction in theoretical linguistics since the English adjective *tough* is a typical example of it.

(16) The problem was tough to solve.

Further "tough" predicates in English include *easy*, *difficult*, *good*, *bad*, *impossible*, etc. In Classical Chinese, "tough" predicates cannot be easily distinguished from normal auxiliaries just by syntax, as there is no overt reflection of their semantic distinction. Thus, we can only distinguish the two classes by semantics. Typical "tough" predicates in Classical Chinese are adjectival too, just like in English, and Pulleyblank lists the following examples:

- *kʰaːlʔ* (叮 [可]) 'possible; permissible'

- *ʔsog* (昆 [足]) 'sufficient, worth'

- *n̥ʰaːn* (難 [難]) 'difficult'

- *leːgs* (易 [易]) 'easy'

(17) a. 天二叮縛亏堂
        天下可運于掌 (MTs)

qʰlʼiːn	*graːʔ*	***kʰaːlʔ***	*ɢuns*	*ɢʷa*	*tjaŋʔ*
tʼiēn	hiá	kò	yűn	iū̌	čàng
heaven	underneath	possible	resolve	in	palm

        'The world may be revolved in the palm of your hand.'   (PB:42)

    b. 影父王不昆 㳆㝎
        則文王不足法與 (MTs)

ʔsɯːg	*muun*	*ɢʷaŋ*	*puʼ*	***ʔsog***	*pqab*		*la*
tsek	wên	wâng	put	tsuk	fap		iȗ
then	Wên	king	not	worth	take as model		Q

        'Then is King Wên not worthy of being taken as a model?'   (PB:42)

    c. 久影難變也
        久則難變也 (MTs)

kʷluʔ		*ʔsɯːg*	***n̥ʰaːn***	*prons*	*laːlʔ*
kieù		tsek	nâm	pién	iè
for a long time		then	difficult	change	AST

        'Having lasted a long time, it was difficult to change.'   (PB:42)

    d. 三秊學不必亏榖不易得也
        三年學不至于穀不易得也 (LI)

suːm	*niːŋ*	*gruːg,*	*puʼ*	*tjigs*	*ɢʷa*	*kloːg,*		*puʼ*	***leːgs***	*tɯːg*	*laːlʔ*
sām	niên	hiok,	put	čí	iū̌	kuk,		put	yik	tek	yè
three	year	study	not	arrive	at	official salary		not	easy	get	AST

        'Having studied for three years but still not becoming a government official (lit. not arriving at an official's salary)—this is not easy to achieve.'   (PB:42)

Among the four items in (17), *kʰa:lʔ* is the closest to an auxiliary verb in meaning and is often freely translated as "can, may." As a "tough" predicate, however, it can only be used "passively" in the sense of "sth. can/may be V-ed." In active contexts, one should use the related compound auxiliary *kʰa:lʔ luʔ* (ㄎ ㆡ [可以]) 'can, able to' instead. This compound auxiliary can be analyzed as follows: *kʰa:lʔ* is still the same "tough" predicate, and *luʔ* is a transitive verb that literally means 'take, use', so the compound auxiliary literally means 'sth. can be used to do sth.' When the "sth." in question is a person, an abstract, agent-marking function is derived from the concept "use," and the reading of the whole construction becomes 'sb. can be the agent to do sth.' or more naturally 'sb. can do sth.'

(18) a. ᠌᠌᠌ (MTs script)
五十者可以衣帛矣 (MTs)

ŋa:ʔ	*gjub*	*tja:ʔ*	***kʰa:lʔ***	***luʔ***	*quls*	*bra:g*	*ɢluʔ*
ngù	šip	čè	kò	ì	í	bak	ì
five	ten	NMLZ	possible	use	wear	silk	PRF

'The fifty-year-olds will be able to wear silk.'   (PB:43)

b. (MTs script)
人而無恆不可以作巫醫 (LI)

njin	*nju*	*ma*	*gu:ŋ,*	*puʔ*	***kʰa:lʔ***	***luʔ***	*ʔsa:gs*	*ma*	*qu*
žîn	rî	wû	hêng,	put	kò	ì	tsok	wû	yī
person	CONJ	not have	perseverance	not	possible	use	be	oracle	doctor

'A person without perseverance (lit. being a person and not having perseverance, [such a person]) cannot be an oracle or a doctor.'   (vdG:456)

Similarly, while *ʔsog* (ㆡ [足]) 'sufficient, worth' can only be used with a passive complement, *ʔsog luʔ* (ㆡ ㆡ [足以]) 'sufficient/worth of being used to' can be used with an active one.

(19) (MTs script)
吾力足以舉百鈞而不足以舉一羽 (MTs)

ŋa:	*rug*	***ʔsog***	***luʔ***	*klaʔ*	*pra:g*	*kʷin*	*nju*	*puʔ*	***ʔsog***	***luʔ***	*klaʔ*	*qlig*
ngû	lik	tsuk	ì	kiù	pek	kiǖn	rî	put	tsuk	ì	kiù	yit
my	strength	sufficient	use	lift	hundred	15kg	CONJ	not	sufficient	use	lift	one

ɢʷaʔ
iǜ
feather

'My strength is sufficient to lift 1500 kilograms but is not sufficient to lift one feather.'
                    (PB:43)

4 Coverbs

The last type of complex predicate–forming elements we learn in this lesson are the "coverbs," which more or less correspond to prepositions in English. Coverbs in Classical Chinese are all derived from verbs, and they still keep quite some verbal characteristics even in their "prepositional" role. For Modern Chinese speakers, the original verbal meanings of many of the coverbs are unfamiliar, but since they are a normal part of Classical Chinese, especially in pre-Qin texts, it is important that we learn them by heart. As with auxiliary verbs, the main difficulty in learning coverbs is the memorization part—we simply need to learn the various "prepositional" items one by one. Table 1 has the main coverbs taught in the two textbooks this tutorial is based on.

Table 1: Major coverbs in Classical Chinese

Coverb	Literal meaning	Coverb meaning
luʔ (㠯 [以])	take, use	with, by means of
laʔ (㦳 [與])	accompany, be with	with, and
ɢʷals (䭹 [爲])	be on the side of, support	for, on behalf of, for the sake of
ɦljids (㫐 [自])		
luw (㽞 [由])	go along, follow	from
zloŋ (㣥 [從])		
ɢʷa (㧧 [于])	go	to, at
qa (㪍 [於])	be in, at	in, at, to, from, than, etc.
nja (㚤 [如])	comply, resemble	like
tjigs (㞉 [至])	arrive	to, till
grub (㞆 [及])	reach	

4.1 Basic syntax

The basic syntax of coverbs is straightforward. They introduce "prepositional" objects of various kinds and are usually—but not always—preverbal. That is, we may see them occur in one of the two constructions in (20).

(20) a. [[Cov NP] VP]
          (≈*V-ing do sth.*, where the present participle acts as an adverbial modifier)

      b. [VP [Cov NP]]
          (≈*do sth. P sth.*, where the PP is an adjunct modifier)

As is reflected in their English quasi equivalents, preverbal coverbs are somewhat more verbal than postverbal ones. To account for the two different word orders, Pulleyblank treats coverbs "as a specialized type of verbs in series" and claims that "the main focus of attention … falls on the last verb in the series" (pp. 47–48). Take the two sentences in (21) for example.

(21) a. 醒呂戈𧽾孓𤿤
      醒以戈逐子犯 (TsČ)

   se:ŋ, **lɯʔ ko:l** *l'uwɢ ʔslɯʔ bomʔ*
   sìng, ì kuō čû tsɨ̀ fám
   wake use halberd chase Tsɨ̀ Fám

   'When he (i.e., Duke Wěn of Tsín) woke up, he chased Tsɨ̀ Fám with a halberd.'
   (PB:47)

   b. 毅𠆥呂梃
      殺人以梃 (MTs)

   sre:d njin **lɯʔ l'e:ŋʔ**
   šat žîn ì t'ìng
   kill person with club

   'kill a person with a club' (PB:47)

À la Pulleyblank, therefore, the literal meanings of the two coverb phrases above are

(22) a. 'he, using a halberd, chased Tsɨ̀ Fám' (with focus on the chasing event)

   b. 'someone, in killing a person, uses a club' (with focus on the tool used)

In addition to the two word orders above, von der Gabelentz mentions a third word order that occasionally occurs in historical documents:

(23) a. [NP Cov VP]

   b. 忠愜呂得𡳿驕愈呂失𡳿
      忠信以得之驕泰以失之 (TH = *Tá Hiok*)

   tuŋ **hljins** **lɯʔ** *tɯ:g tjɯ,* **krew tʰa:ds** **lɯʔ** *hlig tjɯ*
   čūng sín ì tek čī, kiaō t'ái ì šit čī
   self-devotion sincerity by get it pride extravagance by lose it

   'By self-devotion and sincerity he (i.e., the king) gets it (i.e., the kingdom); by pride and extravagance he loses it.' (vdG:283)

On the surface, the Cov in (23a) looks like a postposition, but another possibility is that this is a derived word order via the topicalization or focalization of the NP. This latter analysis seems to fit the sentence in (23b) better, where the two quasi postpositional phrases should more precisely be glossed as '[self-devotion and sincerity]$_i$, by e_i he gets it' and '[pride and extravagance]$_j$, by e_i he loses it' (where e stands for an empty category). Such flexible "P stranding" in the preverbal position is further evidence that Classical Chinese coverbs are still fundamentally verbal and not

English-type prepositions. Postverbal coverbs, on the other hand, can hardly be stranded (24), so they are closer to real prepositions.

(24) *梃殺人以

    梃殺人以 (MTs)

    l'eːŋʔ* *sreːd* *njin*   **luʔ
    t'ìng šat žîn   ì
    club   kill person with

    Intended: 'a club, kill a person with'

4.2 The usage of *luʔ*

Since learning coverbs is essentially vocabulary learning, I will not go through the list in Table 1 one by one. The rule of thumb is that we can simply use Classical Chinese coverbs like prepositions as long as we remember to put them in front of main verbs. Below, I will just illustrate the usage of one coverb in detail—that of *luʔ* (the first one in Table 1). We have already met this coverb above, and here let's first look at its basic verbal sense 'take, use'.

(25) a. 夏后氏以松殷人以栢周人以栗

      夏后氏以松殷人以栢周人以栗 (LI)

      graːʔ *goːʔ* *gjeʔ* **luʔ** **sɢloŋ**, *qun* *njin* **luʔ** **praːg**, *tjuw* *njin* **luʔ**
      hiá heú ší ì   sûng, yīn žîn ì   pek, čeū žîn ì
      Hiá ruler clan use spruce Yīn people use cypress Čeū people use

      rig
      lit
      chestnut

      'The ruler of Hiá used spruces (for certain altars), the Yīn people used cypresses, and the Čeū people used chestnut trees.'   (vdG:278)

  b. 我辭禮矣彼則以之

      我辭禮矣彼則以之 (TsČ)

      ŋaːlʔ *ljiu* *riːʔ* *ɢluʔ*, *pralʔ* *ʔsɯːg* **luʔ** **tjiu**
      ngò ts'î   lì   ì,   pì tsek   ì   čī
      I   decline ritual PRF they by contrast take 3SG

      'I declined the ritual; they, by contrast, took it.'   (PB:47)

In fact, *luʔ* can be flexibly translated as either 'take' or 'use' in both examples, because taking something means using or adopting it as far as these contexts are concerned.

As a coverb, *luʔ* is mainly used to introduce an instrumental object, as in (26a), but sometimes it may also introduce an accusative (i.e., direct) object, as in (26b).

(26) a. 以正治國以奇用兵以無事取天下 (TTK)

luʔ	***tjeŋs***		*l'ɯs*	*kʷɯːg,*	***luʔ***	***gral***		*loŋs*	*praŋ,*	***luʔ***	***ma***
ì	číng		čí	kuok,	ì	k'î		yúng	pīng,	ì	wû
by	uprightness		rule	state	by	crafty	dexterity	use	weapon	by	not.have

ʔsrɯs	*shloʔ*		*qʰl'iːn*	*graːʔ*
ssɨ́	ts'iǔ		t'iēn	hiá
thing	take hold of		heaven	underneath

'One may rule (lit. one rules) a state by uprightness, use weapons by crafty dexterity, and make the kingdom his own by freedom from action and purpose.'

(vdG:279)

b. 君子以仁存心以禮存心 (MTs)

klun		*ʔslɯʔ*	***luʔ***	***njin***		*zluːn*	*slɯm,*	***luʔ***	***riːʔ***		*zluːn*
kiūn		ts'ɨ̀	ì	žîn		ts'ûn	sīm	ì	lì		ts'ûn
gentleman		HON	ACC	benevolence		keep	heart	ACC	good manners		keep

slɯm
sīm
heart

'A man of noble character keeps benevolence in his heart; (he) keeps good manners in his heart.'

(vdG:281)

When the object of *luʔ* is the third-person pronoun *tjɯ*, it must be omitted, as in (27).

(27) 語皆道古以害今飾虛言以亂實 (SsK)

ŋaʔ	*kriːl*	*l'uːʔ*	*kaːʔ*	***luʔ***		*gaːds*	*krɯm,*	*hljɯg*	*qʰa*	*ŋan*	***luʔ***		*roːns*
iǔ	kiāi	taò	kù	ì		hái	kīm,	šik	hiū	yên	ì		luén
talk	all	speak	ancient	thereby		harm	now	polish	false	word	thereby		confuse

ɦlig
šit
fact

'When they talk, they all speak of ancient times and thereby condemn the present, and polish false words (i.e., lies) and thereby confuse the facts.' (vdG:285)

In this sentence, the two occurrences of *luʔ* can both be understood as 'by it/that' and freely translated as "thereby." One could also say that the pronoun is incorporated into the coverb in this situation. Von der Gabelentz calls this use of coverbs "concise" (*prägnant* in German) since a demonstrative object is semantically included in the coverb (*dann schliessen sie der Bedeutung nach ein demonstratives Object in sich ein*, p.277). Similarly, Pulleyblank calls this the anaphoric use of *luʔ* and translates it as 'with it, therewith'—"as if it included the pronoun" (p.48). He also points that the anaphoric *luʔ* is often used to express purpose, where it is more naturally translated as 'and thereby, in order to' (I have already adopted this translation in (27)). Another common use of the anaphoric *luʔ*, according to Pulleyblank, is to mark "the point of departure for spatial and temporal phrases," as in *luʔ m·ruː:g* (ᘘ 常 [以來]) 'lit. therewith come; and afterwards, since', *luʔ graʔ* (ᘘ 下 [以下]) 'lit. therewith go down; and downwards', *luʔ ɢʷaŋ* (ᘘ 裡 [以往]) 'lit. therewith go; and formerly, before', and the like.

Apart from the basic uses above, *luʔ* still has a number of other/derived uses:

(28)   a.   As a verb: 'take…as, deem' (28a), 'affect, concern' (28b)

　　　　b.   As a coverb: 'because of' (29a), 'as' (29b), comitative/coordinative marker (29c), temporal adverbial marker (29d)

(29)   a.   亐 宬國爲 廷廄民 自 ᘘ 不 冤
　　　　　　于定國爲廷尉民自以不冤 (SsK)

ɢʷa	deːŋs	kʷɯː:g	ɢʷal	l'eː:ŋ	quds,	min	**filjids**	**luʔ**	**puʼ qon**
iû	tíng	kuok	wêi	t'ìng	wéi,	mîn	tsí̄	ì	put yuēn
Iû	Tíng	Kuok	be	court	officer	people	self	deem	not wronged

'With Iû Tíng Kuok being the Commandant of Justice (lit. court officer), the people deem themselves not wronged.'　　　　　　　　　　　　(vdG:279)

　　　　b.   予 一 人 有 罪 ᘘ 爾 萬 方
　　　　　　予一人有罪無以爾萬方 (Šū)

laʔ	qlig	njin	ɢʷuʔ	zuː:lʔ,	ma	**luʔ**	**njelʔ**	**mlans**	**paŋ**
iû	yit	žîn	yeù	tsúi,	wû	ì	rì	wán	fāng
I	one	person	have	guilt	don't	concern	you	ten thousand	place

'(If) I alone have guilt, (then) it doesn't affect you all who reside in my kingdom.'
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(vdG:279)

The sentence in (29a) depicts Iû Tíng Kuok as a righteous Commandant of Justice. This use of *luʔ* is often accompanied by the copula ɢʷal, forming the construction [*luʔ* N ɢʷal A] 'deem/consider N A'. Semantically, this is equivalent to the denominative use of adjectives (a type of causativization) introduced in Lesson 2, in the construction [A$_{Caus}$ N] 'lit. cause N to be A (in one's mind); consider N A'. The sentence in (29b) is the vow of an emperor. It contains two idiomatic terms of address: *laʔ qlig njin* 'lit. I one person' is a humble 1SG pronoun used by pre-Qin state rulers,

and *njelʔ mlans paŋ* 'lit. you (from) ten thousand places' is a special 2PL pronoun referring to all people living in a kingdom. A similar idiomatic term of address is *njelʔ ʔlʼaːl zruʔ* (爾 多 士 [爾多士]) 'lit. you numerous officers', which is sometimes used by state rulers to address ministers collectively in preclassical texts (especially in *Book of Documents*). Also note that some later texts quoting the vow in (29b) have *gruub* (及 [及]) 'reach' instead of *luʔ*, including the relatively early *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* (Qin dynasty), which suggests that this particular flavor of the verbal *luʔ* was already obsolescent in the Classical Chinese period.

(30) a. 楚人呂是訊孚重
楚人以是咎子重 (MTs)

sŋʰraʔ	*njin*	***luʔ***	***djeʔ***	*guuwʔ*	*ʔsluʔ*	*doŋs*
ts'ù	žîn	ì		šǐ	kieú	tsǐ̀	čúng
Ts'ù	people	because of	this	reprobate	Tsǐ̀-Čúng	

'The Ts'ù people reprobate Tsǐ̀-Čúng because of this.' (vdG:280)

b. 呂喬辟臣𣆌中
以君辟臣辱也 (TsČ)

luʔ	***klun***	*begs*	*giŋ,*		*njog*	*laːlʔ*
ì	kiǖn	pí	č'ín,		žuk	yè
as	king	flee	subject (minister)		humiliation	AST

'Fleeing from a subject as a king is humiliation.' (vdG:281)

c. 天大雷電呂𩗗
天大雷電以風 (Šū)

qʰlʼiːn	*daːds*	*ruːl*	*lʼiːns*	***luʔ***	***plum***
t'iēn	tá	lûi	tién	ì	fūng
heaven	big	thunder	lightning	along with	wind

'There was a great thunderstorm along with wind.' (vdG:282)

d. 呂凶秊趭邑
以凶年造邑 (KYČ)

luʔ	***qʰoŋ***	***niːŋ***	*sguːʔ*	*qruub*
ì	hiūng	niên	tsaó	yip
by	bad	year	make	city

'(He) built a city in a year of famine.' (vdG:281)

In (30a), *luʔ* introduces a cause/reason and can be flexibly translated as 'because of' or 'for...'. This use of *luʔ* can take a clausal complement too, thus introducing a longer reason. In (30b), *luʔ* means 'in the capacity of' or more succinctly 'as'. In (30c), *luʔ* adds 'wind' as an accompanying

element to 'thunderstorm' and is translated as 'along with' (or simply as 'with' in the comitative sense). The literal meaning of the sentence is 'the heaven thundered and lightning-ed along with wind'. In (30d), *luʔ* simply introduces a temporal adverbial. The logic behind this use is probably based on the literal reading 'using a certain time, do sth.'—and it often involves a "postpositional" *luʔ*, as in (31).

(31) a. 夜 吕 繼 日
 夜以繼日 (MTs)

laːgs luʔ *keːgs njig*
yé ì kí žit
night use continue day

'continue the day by night (lit. using the night, continue the day)'   (vdG:283)

 b. 若晉君朝以入則婢子夕以死夕以入則朝以死 (TsČ)
 若晉君朝以入則婢子夕以死夕以入則朝以死 (TsČ)

njag ʔsins klun ***ʔrʼew*** ***luʔ*** *njub, ʔsuːg beʔ* *ʔsluʔ* ***ljaːg*** ***luʔ*** *hljiʔ;*
žok tsín kiǖn čaō ì žip, tsek pʼì tsǐ sik ì ssǐ;
if Tsín king morning by enter then servant girl DIM evening by die

ljaːg ***luʔ*** *njub, ʔsuːg* ***ʔrʼew*** ***luʔ*** *hljiʔ*
sik ì žip, tsek čaō ì ssǐ
evening by enter then morning by die

'If the King of Tsín (i.e., Duke Hoéi of Tsín) comes here (as a prisoner) in the morning, then this servant-girl (i.e., I) will die (i.e., kill myself [as well as our children]) in the evening. If he comes in the evening, then I will die in the (next) morning.'
 (vdG:283)

The phrase in (31a) has become a fossilized idiom and is still in use in Modern Chinese to describe someone who works very hard. The leftward movement of 'night' is probably for emphasizing purposes. Similarly, in (31b), which depicts the determination of the speaker (the half sister of the King of Tsín) to save her brother from being captured (by her husband's army), the movement of 'evening' and 'morning' is for contrasting purposes.

A final point to mention about *luʔ* is that it has a less frequent alternative, *loŋs* (用 [用]), which literally means 'use' too. See (32) for an illustration.

(32) a. 用二𣂈二謂𡳿賞賢用二𣂈二謂𡳿尊賢
用下敬上謂之貴貴用上敬下謂之尊賢 (MTs)

loŋs	*gra:ʔ*	*kreŋs*	*djaŋʔ,*	*ɢuds*	*tjuu*	*kluds*	*kluds;*	*loŋs*	*djaŋʔ*
yúng	hiá	kíng	šáng,	wéi	čī	kuéi	kuéi;	yúng	šáng
as	subordinate	respect	superior	call	it	treat as noble	noble	as	superior

kreŋs	*gra:ʔ,*	*ɢuds*	*tjuu*	*ʔsu:n*	*gi:n*
kíng	hiá,	wéi	čī	tsǖn	kiên
respect	subordinate	call	it	respect	virtue

'Paying respect to one's superior as a subordinate, we call this treating nobles as nobles; paying respect to one's subordinate as a superior, we call this respecting people of virtue.' (vdG:288)

b. 謀夫孔多是用不集
謀夫孔多是用不集 (Šī)

mu	*pa*	*kʰlo:ŋʔ*	*ʔl'a:l,*	*djeʔ*	*loŋs*	*puu'*	*zub*
meû	fū	k'ùng	tō,	ší	yúng	put	tsip
plot	man	very	many	this	because of	not	accomplish

'There are too many strategists, but (precisely) because of that they are not accomplishing anything.'

4.3 More on *ɢʷa* (亐[于]) and *qa* (㣄[於])

While not going into detail about the remaining coverbs in Table 1, I do want to say a bit more about the two closely related and often confused coverbs of place: *ɢʷa* (亐[于]) and *qa* (㣄[於]). In Modern Chinese, 亐 and 㣄 are just the simplified and traditional ways (respectively) to write the same coverb *iǖ*, which denotes a number of dative/locative meanings 'at, to, from, etc.'. But in Old Chinese, especially in the preclassical period, a grammatical distinction used to be made between the two to some extent. For expository convenience, I have been sticking to the more ancient form 亐 so far in this tutorial series (because it is easier to typeset in LaTeX), but from now on, I will aim to distinguish the two forms 亐 and 㣄 more carefully.

According to Pulleyblank,[1] *ɢʷa* is etymologically related to the verb *ɢʷaŋ* (祥[往]) 'go', and from there was derived its use as an inceptive or continuative aspect marker (prefixal), as in (33).

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[1] Pulleyblank's textbook only has limited information on this topic, and von der Gabelentz's textbook does not discuss it at all. See Pulleyblank's (1986) paper "The locative particles Yü 于, Yü 於, and Hu 乎" (*Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 106, No. 1, pp. 1–12) for a dedicated discussion.

(33) a. 𩾏皇𭣄飛翩翩其羽
      鳳皇于飛翩翩其羽 (Šī)

bums	*gʷaːŋ*	**ɢʷa pul**,	*qʰʷaːds*	*qʰʷaːds*	*gu*	*ɢʷaʔ*
fúng	hoâng	iǖ fēi,	hoēi	hoēi	k'î	iǜ
male phoenix	female phoenix	go fly	rustling		3POSS	wing

      'The male and female phoenixes are flying about (lit. go flying), their wings rustling.'

   b. 𡳿𠻝𭣄歸宐其宨宬
      之子于歸宜其室家 (Šī)

tjɯ	*ʔslɯʔ*	**ɢʷa klul**,	*ŋral*	*gu*	*hlig*	*kraː*
čī	tsǐ	iǖ kuēi,	ngî	k'î	šit	kiā
this child		go go to the husband's home	good	3POSS	chamber	house

      'This maiden is going to her new home (lit. goes going-to-husband's-home)—great for the newlyweds!'

As a coverb, ɢʷa is always postverbal and is mainly used after motion verbs to indicate destination or direction (especially in *Classic of Poetry*), as in (34a). Occasionally, it is also used to indicate location without motion (34b), temporal motion 'until' (34c), or the recipient of an action (34d).

(34) a. 𭣄㠯求𡳿𭣄林𡳿二
      于以求之于林之下 (Šī)

ɢʷa	*lɯʔ*	*gu*	*tjɯ*,	**ɢʷa**	*g·rum*	*tjɯ*	*graːʔ*
iǖ	ì	k'ieû	čī,	iǖ	lîm	čī	hiá
go	to	search	them	toward	forest	GEN	underneath

      '(We) go to look for them (i.e., our horses), to the forest and downward.'

   b. 鶴鳴𭣄垤婦歎𭣄宬
      鶴鳴于垤婦歎于室 (Šī)

koːns	*mreŋ*	**ɢʷa diːg**,	*bɯʔ*	*n̥ʰaːns*	**ɢʷa hlig**
kuán	mîng	iǖ dit,	fú	t'án	iǖ šit
crane	cry	on anthill	wife	sigh	in room

      'Cranes were crying on anthills; (our) wives were signing in their rooms.'

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c. 𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆
不常厥邑于今五邦 (Šū)

puꞌ	*djaŋ*	*kod*	*qrɯb,*	***ɢʷa krɯm***	*ŋaːʔ*	*proːŋ*
put	čʼáng	kiuet	yip,	iǖ kīm	ngù	pāng
not	constant	3POSS	city	till now	five	state region

'They did not ever stay in the same city for long (lit. not constant were their cities); up till now (their capital) has been in five state regions.'

d. 𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆𝌆
言私其豵獻豜于公 (Šī)

ŋan	*sil*	*gu*	*ʔsloːŋ,*	*sŋaːl*	*ŋeːns*	***ɢʷa***
yên	ssī	kʼî	tsūng,	hién	kiēn	iǖ
PRT	make private	3POSS	one-year-old pig	offer	three-year-old pig	to

> ***kloːŋ***
> kūng
> prince

'They keep the younger pigs to themselves and offer the older ones to the prince.'

All but one of the above examples are taken from *Classic of Poetry* because, as mentioned above, that is where ɢʷa predominantly occurs. The word quickly became obsolete in history and got replaced by *qa*, initially in part and eventually in whole. According to Pulleyblank, it survives to some extent in *The Commentary of Tsò*[2] and *Discourses of the States* but is rare in other texts of the Warring States period. Overall, the language of *Classic of Poetry* is quite interesting from a theoretical linguistic perspective, because it involves much discourse-driven word order variation on the one hand and retains quite some traces of a morphologically richer era of the Chinese language on the other. The aspectual use of ɢʷa in (33) and the "meaningless" verbal prefix *ŋan* in (34d) are but two examples.

Compared to ɢʷa, the history of the coverb *qa* is much shorter. According to Pulleyblank, 於 started its life as a character to record the onomatopoeic exclamation particle [ʔɑ] (his reconstruction), which is also its main usage in *Classic of Poetry*. It later got employed to record the intransitive verb 'be in/at', and this was totally independent of its onomatopoeic use.

The verbal use of *qa* is clearly reflected in the topic construction [A *tjɯ qa* B] 'as for A's relation to B', as in (35a), where *tjɯ* is the genitive marker serving to nominalize the clause [A *qa* B] 'A is in B'. Clause nominalization is a regular function of the genitive marker *tjɯ* in Classical Chinese, as in (35b).

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[2]According to Wáng Lìk (王力), ɢʷa is mainly used in *The Commentary of Tsò* in front of place names (usually in the directional sense), whereas *qa* is mainly used in the sense of 'than' after adjectives to express comparison or in the sense of 'by' in passive sentences to introduce the agent.

(35) a. 𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓
寡人之於國也盡心焉耳矣 (MTs)

kʷra:ʔ	*njin*	***tju***	***qa***	*kʷɯ:g*	*la:lʔ,*	*zlinʔ*	*sluɯ*	*qan*	*njuʔ*	*ɢluʔ*
kuà	žín	čī	iǖ	kuok	yè,	tsín	sīm	yên	rǐ	ì
lacking	person	GEN	be in	state	AST	exhaust	heart	in it	AST	PRF

'As for lacking-person's (i.e., my) relation to (lit. my being in) my state, I have simply done my utmost in (governing) it.'

b. 𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓
不患人之不己知患不知人也 (LI)

puʼ	*gro:ns*	*njin*	***tju***	*puʼ*	*kuʔ*	*ʔlʼe,*	*gro:ns*	*puʼ*	*ʔlʼe*	*njin*	*la:lʔ*
put	huán	žîn	čī	put	kì	čī,	huán	put	čī	žîn	yè
not	worry	people	GEN	not	self	know	worry	not	know	people	AST

'I do not worry about other people's not knowing me, but only worry about not knowing other people.'

In (35b), *tju* nominalizes an ordinary clause 'other people do not know me'. In (35a), it nominalizes a clause involving a linking verb 'I am in my state'. Since this grammatical function of *tju* is highly regular, we can safely conclude that this *qa* is syntactically a verb.

In line with the static locative meaning of *qa* as a verb, its coverb use is also static instead of directional. This is its major difference from *ɢʷa* in texts that distinguish the two (mainly *Classic of Poetry*). And accordingly, it is always used "with verbs that imply rest rather than motion" (Pulleyblank 1986:4), as in (36).

(36) a. 𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓
靜女其姝俟我於城隅 (Šī)

zleŋʔ	*naʔ*	*gɯ*	*tʰjo,*	*sɢruʔ*	*ŋa:lʔ*	***qa***	***djeŋ***	***ŋo***
tsíng	niǜ	kʼî	šū,	ssî́	ngò	iǖ	šîng	iǖ
quiet	girl	PRT	lovely	wait	me	at	city wall	corner

'How lovely the quiet girl is! She is waiting for me at the corner of the city wall.'

b. 𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓𔐓
心之憂矣於我歸息 (Šī)

zlinʔ	*tju*	*qu*	*ɢluʔ,*	***qa***	***ŋa:lʔ***	*klul*	*sluɡ*
sīm	čī	yeū	ì,	iǖ	ngò	kuēi	sî
heart	GEN	worry	SFP	at	me	come home	rest

'My heart is so worried! Come home and rest with me (lit. at my place come home and rest).'

The interpretation of (36b) is controversial, and here I am following Pulleyblank (1986). It is important to bear in mind that no matter what the grammatical distinction between *ɢʷa* and *qa* might have been, it got blurred after the era of *Classic of Poetry*. That is, *qa* was already pretty much the standard locative (37a), dative (37b), and occasionally even ablative (37c) coverb at Confucius's time.

(37) a. 王血於𣴎二
王立於沼上 (MTs)

*ɢʷaŋ rub **qa tjewʔ djaŋʔ***
wâng lip iǖ čaò šáng
king stand on pond top

'The king was standing above his pond.'   (PB:54)

b. 𪔐方叔人於𣲗播𪔐㱿人於漢
鼓方叔入於河播鼗武入於漢 (LI)

*kʷaːʔ paŋ hljuwɢ njub **qa ɢaːl**, paːls lʼaːw maʔ njub **qa***
kù fāng šuk žip iǖ hô, pó taó wù žip iǖ
drum Fāng Šuk enter to river shake hand drum Wù enter to

hnaːns
hán
Hán

'The drummer, Fāng Šuk, withdrew to the north of the Yellow River. The hand drum player, Wù, withdrew to Hán (a place name).'   (vdG:290)

c. 吾聞𣲗於幽谷遷亏喬木𪜈未聞二喬木而人於幽谷𪜈
吾聞出於幽谷遷于喬木者未聞下喬木而入於幽谷者 (MTs)

*ŋaː mun kʰljud **qa quw kloːg** shen ɢʷa grew moːg tjaːʔ, muuds mun*
ngû wên čʼut iǖ yeū kuk tsiēn iǖ kʼiaô muk čè, wéi wên
I hear exit from deep valley move to tall tree NMLZ have not hear
graːʔ grew moːg njuꝿ njub qa quw kloːg tjaːʔ
hiá kʼiaô muk rî̂ žip iǖ yeū kuk čè
come down tall tree and enter to deep valley NMLZ

'I have heard of those who (i.e., birds that) leave (lit. exit from) deep valleys and move to tall trees but have not heard of those who come down from tall trees and go into deep valleys.'   (PB:55)

Note that the author of (37c) quotes a verse line '(birds) leave deep valleys and move to tall trees' from *Classic of Poetry*. Interestingly, he has kept the more ancient *ɢʷa* for the dative 'to' in the quoted line. Outside the quote, he switches to the less ancient *qa* in the second half of the sentence to convey the same (dative) meaning ('go into deep valleys'). Besides, he has flexibly replaced the original ablative coverb *ɦljids* (自 [自]) 'from' in the quote with *qa*, perhaps to avoid

robotic parroting. Recall that the core meaning of ɢʷa is 'motion toward', which makes it in principle incompatible with the sense 'from'. By comparison, qa 'lit. be at/in' is not subject to this constraint. As such, qa might have had more semantic "potential" than ɢʷa in its historical development, hence its gaining the upper hand.

The coverb qa has a phonological variant ɢa: (兮[乎]), which is an unstressed form of qa according to Pulleyblank, maybe an enclitic. It never occurs in the phrase-initial position.

(38) 𛰓兮爾酱反兮爾酱也
出乎爾者反乎爾者也 (MTs)

kʰljud ɢa: *njelʔ tja:ʔ* **panʔ ɢa:** *njelʔ tja:ʔ la:lʔ*
č'ut   hû   rì   čè   fàn   hû   rì   čè   yè
exit   from you NMLZ return to   you NMLZ AST

'What goes out from you will be what returns to you.'   (PB:55)

Here, the enclitic form of qa is used in both the ablative and the dative sense, which would not have been possible for the more ancient ɢʷa.

Finally, neither ɢʷa nor qa allows the third-person pronoun tju after it. Instead, they each have a "pronominalized" variant: ɢʷan (爰 [爰]) and qan (焉 [焉]). The former mainly occurs in *Classic of Poetry* just like its nonpronominal basis ɢʷa, meaning 'there, then, thereupon', while qan regularly occurs in post-*Classic of Poetry* texts, meaning 'in/to/from/by/than/etc. it'. See (39) for an illustration.

(39) a. 爰居爰處爰喪其馬
          爰居爰處爰喪其馬 (Šī)

          ɢʷan *ku* **ɢʷan** *kʰljaʔ,* **ɢʷan** *sma:ŋs gu mra:ʔ*
          yuên kiǖ yuên č'ù, yuên sáng k'î mà
          there stay there dwell there lose   our horse

          'There we stayed; there we dwelled; there we lost our horses.'

  b. 制巖邑也號叔死焉
          制巖邑也號叔死焉 (TsČ)

          kjeds, ŋra:m   *qrɯb la:lʔ; kʷra:g hljɯwɢ hljiʔ* **qan**
          čì,   yêm   yip yè; kuok šuk   ssì   yên
          Čí   dangerous city AST Kuok Šuk   die   there

          'Čí is a dangerous city. Kuok Šuk died there.'

As is reflected in these examples, ɢʷan is usually used in the sentence-initial position, while qan is more naturally used in the postverbal position (in declarative sentences). I do not know whether this difference is theoretically significant (it could be).

Exercises

Translate the following sentences into Classical Chinese using words and grammatical points in this lesson.

1. Mencius is rich and noble.

2. Duke Wên of T'êng is a ruler of great virtue. The poor and lowly don't get to meet him.

3. The king wishes to govern the kingdom and enlarge its territory.

4. The talented can give way to others and are capable of following God's will.

5. You should not speak ill of your father.

6. The young lord hid himself in the market and didn't dare face me.

7. Č'ī Yeû is doomed to die in the tiled room. There is no more trouble in the future.

8. King Wên made the people follow the good person as a role model.

9. The world is difficult to get but easy to lose.

10. Oracles and doctors can wear silk and are kindly willing to come.

11. Tsì̂ Fám lifted a feather with self-devotion and sincerity.

12. I$_{\text{humble.emperor}}$ rule the state with benevolence. You numerous officers should treat nobles as nobles and respect people of virtue.

13. There are too many thunderstorms in a year of famine. The strategists reprobate this me$_{\text{feminine.humble}}$ because of this.

14. The big crane is flying about, the quiet girl is going to her new home; they continue day and night.

15. As for the phoenixes' relation to the King of Tsín, they are good for his country (i.e., state region) and cities.

16. The wife keeps the older pigs to herself and stores up (i.e., sells) the younger ones on the market.

17. Fāng Šuk moved to Ts'ù, and there he lost his drum.

18. Kuok Šuk searched horses in Čí for the king. He lived there for three years.

19. From Yīn till Čeū, ministers all speak about ancient times with their kings. I$_{\text{humble.emperor}}$, on the other hand, worry that they might adorn lies to harm the present.