

**TLAN 301: CLASSICAL TIBETAN TRANSLATION PROJECT I/  
TLAN 401: ADVANCED CLASSICAL TIBETAN SEMINAR I**

Fall 2021

**Instructor: Lowell Cook**

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Class time: TBA

**Course Description:** Classical Tibetan Translation Project/Advanced Classical Tibetan Seminar (TLAN 301 and TLAN 401) aim to further develop students' Classical Tibetan reading comprehension, familiarity with Tibetan literature, and English language translation skills. The course consists of two primary components: in-class readings and an independent translation project. The theme for this semester's readings is narrative in Tibetan Buddhist literature. Narrative includes genres such as *jataka* (*skyes rabs*), *avadāna* (*rtogs brjod*), biography (*rnam thar*), autobiography (*rang rnam*), epic (*sgrung*), tales (*gtam rgyud*), mythology (*lha sgrung*), and many others. Our in-class reading will cover three narrative excerpts from texts of varying time periods:

1. *The Sūtra of the Wise and Foolish* (*mdo mdzangs blun*)  
-from the Kangyur, translated by 'Gos chos grub (755?-849)
2. "Gesar's Birth Story" (*'khrungs rabs*)  
-from *The Gesar Epic*, (*ge gsar sgrung*, 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards)
3. *Ambushing the Enemy: A Treatise based on the Story of an Old Couple* (*rgan rgon pho mo'i lo rgyus dang sbyar ba'i bstan bcos dgra bo 'phrang sgug*)  
-by Ngag dbang blo bzang mkhas grub of Kalkha (1779-1837)

Outside of class, each student will undertake a model translation project on their own gradually over the semester. This will take part according to four assignments.

Assignment 1: Locating your chosen genre

Assignment 2: Selecting an exemplary text of that genre

Assignment 3: Draft translation and glossary

Assignment 4: Submit final translation with glossary, summary, and introduction

Students can expect to come away with from this class with improved understanding of Tibetan grammar and increased vocabulary; a deeper familiarity with Tibetan literature in general and the narrative genre in particular; and a greater understanding of what is required of a professional translator and the skills to begin working on professional-level translations like those of 84000. This course is particularly well-suited for those who aspire to work as professional translators, but is appropriate for anyone from any background who wishes to move their Tibetan reading comprehension and English translation skills to the next level.

**Course Prerequisites and Requirements:** The prerequisite for TLAN 301 is TLAN 202 or the equivalent of two years of Classical Tibetan study. The prerequisite for TLAN 401 is TLAN 302 or the equivalent of three years of Classical Tibetan study. Given that this is an online course, students are required to have a working internet connection and computer on which they will download Microsoft Teams. All required course materials, such as texts and articles, will be distributed electronically via Microsoft Teams. Students will not be required to purchase any additional materials for the course.

**Assessment:**

Quizzes and in-class preparedness: 30%  
Midterm: 20%  
Final project: 50%  
    Assignment 1: (5%)  
    Assignment 2: (5%)  
    Assignment 3: (30%)  
    Assignment 4: (60%)

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. At the end of the semester, these will be averaged and a letter grade given according to the following grading scheme:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	≥ 93.3%
A-	≥ 90.0%
B+	≥ 86.6%
B	≥ 83.3%
B-	≥ 80.0%
C+	≥ 76.6%
C	≥ 73.3%
C-	≥ 70.0%
D	≥ 60-69%
F	<60 %

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The first offense will result in a zero for the assignment or assessment; additional offenses will result in a failing grade for the course. A detailed explanation of what constitutes academic dishonesty will be provided in writing and will be discussed on the first day of class.

**Class Schedule:** The course consists of two master class of 90-minute classes per week. The class schedule will be determined prior to the start of the Fall Semester. The instructor will be available outside of class hours to help students.