

# Philosophical Maxims of 2000 Years Ago

二千年前的哲言

(汉英对照)

本社编著

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张晓敏 范 嘉

弘揚中華民族優秀傳統  
文化，古為今用，為建設富強  
民主、文明的社會主義現代化  
中國作貢獻。

李嵐清

一九九七年九月一日

中共中央政治局常委、國務院  
副總理李嵐清為本書題詞

*Carry forward the fine cultural traditions of the Chinese nation, make the past serve the present, and dedicate to the modernization drive to build China into a prosperous, strong, democratic and culturally advanced socialist country.*

*Li Lanqing*

Member of the Standing Committee of  
the Political Bureau, CCPC  
Vice Premier of the State Council, PRC  
September 1, 1997

## 序

龚学平

世纪之交的中国，正处在经济高速增长阶段，而经济的发展必然带来思想观念的深刻变化。建立起与新的经济基础相适应的社会观念形态，培养和造就千百万有理想、有道德、有文化、有纪律的社会主义新人，是有中国特色的社会主义事业顺利进行的重要保证。

“不能设想，一个没有强大精神支柱的民族，可以自立于世界民族之林。”江泽民总书记这一科学论断，既揭示了中国现代化进程中精神文明建设的重要性，也指明了这种建设的必由之路。马克思主义作为继承和发展人类思想文化一切有价值成果的结晶，对于新观念形态的建立自然有着不可替代的指导作用，而同时，任何民族、任何时期的思想文化体系都不是无本之木，它必然要以本民族的传统文化作为自己生长的养料。适应新时代经济基础的新的观念形态，必然是马克思主义与本民族文化传统精华之完美结合。中国作为四大文明古国之一，具有五千年悠久且深厚的文化传统，以马克思主义为指导、以社会主义初级阶段的现实为立足点，批判其封建性

的糟粕，汲取其民主性的精华，是建设“有中国特色的社会主义文化”体系之必需。

活跃于二千多年前的先秦诸子，奏响了中华文明的序曲。他们在人与自然关系的大背景中百家争鸣，以探究人的生命价值为起点，以追求理想人格为目标，以谋求各人在社会和谐中的恰当责任为归宿。不难发现，他们卓越的智慧中闪耀着朴素唯物主义和辩证法的光芒，他们所倡导的理想人格与共产主义道德品质也有不少契合点，正是这些思想，铸就了中华民族的主体精神和主流文化。因此，批判继承中华优秀传统文化，必须正本清源，从先秦时代做起。

由市委宣传部、市教委和上海古籍出版社共同组织编写的《二千年前的哲言》一书，以邓小平理论为指导，以辩证唯物主义原理为研究方法，通过缜密的排比，系统地再现了先秦诸子睿智的思想精华，适应了社会和时代的需要，是一本兼具思想教育和知识熏陶双重作用的好书，它不但是青少年学生思想道德教育的良好教材，同时也可以作为社会各阶层人士提高道德修养、增益思辨能力的有益读物。我有幸与问此事，特为之序。

1997年11月25日



## Preface

*Gong Xueping*

China, at the turn of the new century, is in the process of a rapid economic growth, which is sure to bring about profound changes in the social ideology. To ensure the smooth advancement of the cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, we must establish the healthy social ideology in accordance with the new economic basis, and to train and bring up millions and millions of socialist successors with high ideas, moral integrity, a good education and a strong sense of discipline.

"It is out of the question for a nation without her own ideological prop, to survive among nations of the world." This scientific thesis of General Secretary Jiang Zemin not only shows us the importance of culture and ethic in the drive for socialist modernization, but also points out the right direction for us. Marxism, a quintessence of almost all valuable human thoughts and culture, undoubtedly has a directive function in establishing the new social ideology. At the same time, the new social ideology should also base itself on the cultural tradition of the nation, because cultural

and ideological systems in any nations, at any periods have, like the trees, their own roots, from which they grow. So the new ideology in accordance with the new economic basis, must be a fine synthesis combining Marxism with the essence of traditional Chinese culture. China, one of the four countries with an ancient civilization, is famous for her long and deep-rooted traditional culture of 5000 years. To discard the feudal dross and select the democratic essence of it, under the guidance of Marxism and from the reality of the primary stage of socialism, is a requirement of building socialist cultural system with Chinese characteristics.

The various schools of thought in pre-Qin period about 2000 years ago were a prelude to the Chinese civilization. They contended with each other in discussing the relations between human and nature, with a starting point to search for the value of life, an aim to seek the perfect individuality and a destination to take respective responsibilities to keep social harmony. Their great thoughts shone a light of naive materialism and naive dialectics, and the perfect individuality they sought somewhat agreed with the communist moral character. It was just these splendid thoughts that constituted the main aspects of Chinese spirits and culture. So, to critically inherit traditional Chinese culture, we must start from the pre-Qin period to clear up the source of moral character.

Under the guidance of Deng Xiaoping's theory and on the principle of dialectic materialism, the Propaganda Department of Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the Shanghai Municipal Educational Commission, together with the Shanghai Classics Publishing House, organized and compiled

this book *The Philosophical Maxims of 2000 Years Ago*, which systematically shows us the essential thoughts of ancient philosophers in pre-Qin period, and fit in with the needs of the society and the time. Such a good book with both moral and intellectual educational significance can not only serve as good morality training materials for the young students, but also help people of various circles to improve their moral characters and the analytic ability. I do feel honored to write the preface for this book.

November 15, 1997

## 汉英对照本出版说明

一、本社编辑的《二千年前的哲言》出版以后,受到了社会各阶层的欢迎,人们普遍认为这是一本了解中国传统文化的基本内核、继承中国文化优秀传统的好教材,对加强青少年的爱国主义教育和思想品德教育具有积极的意义。同时,它对于向外介绍中国传统文化、让外国朋友了解中国,也有特殊的价值。为此,我们与华东师范大学对外汉语系合作,以原中文本为底本,翻译出版了这本汉英对照本。

二、本书辑选先秦哲人语录 561 则,编为三部分:《修养篇》表现人格铸造和自我修养的道德规范;《行为篇》显示个人与社会关系中的行为准则;《思维篇》介绍先秦哲学中唯物论和辩证法思想的精华。三篇按内容的内在联系,分若干层次。除在章前作简要的题解外,并在每一层次后殿以提纲挈领的小结。题解、小结与卷首绪论构成全书纲领,共同作为导读。

三、本书语录采自以下 20 种先秦著作:《周易》、《尚书》、《诗经》、《礼记》、《孝经》、《左传》、《国语》、《论语》、《孟子》、《老子》、《庄子》、《管子》、《荀子》、《孙子》、《晏子春秋》、《墨子》、《商君书》、《韩非子》、《吕氏春秋》、《楚辞》,版本均取用本社出版的各种整理本或白文本。书后附有语录索引及对上述各书的介绍,以便查阅和进一步研究原文。

四、本书中文版用白话对原文进行了直译,对有关字词的意义进行了注释,对难字、僻字进行了注音。考虑到汉英对照本的不同对象和不同需要,这些内容在本版本中均没有保留。

五、本书的英译,在传统译论“信”、“达”、“雅”的基础上,采用了“明白”、“通畅”、“简洁”三个标准。这是因为我们觉得中译英、特别是中国古籍的英译,与英译中相比,既有共同的规律,又有自身的特点。“明白”指在透彻了解原文的基础上,把原文的意思完整无误地用英语表达出来,决不做表面上每个字都译出了,但串起来却让人不知所云的所谓“翻译”;“通畅”指尊重汉英两种语言各自的特点,务求将艰涩的古汉语用流畅的现代英语确切地表达出来,不斤斤于语言结构表层的相似;“简洁”则因为本书均是语录体,读起来有格言的感觉,我们力求使译文给英语读者也能造成这样的感觉。因此,本书的译文,在短小精悍方面,作了最大的努力。

六、本书的中文部分由社内同仁集体编写,英语翻译由华东师范大学潘文国教授主持。该校对外汉语系的张洁华、黄蕾、徐来、杨静、孙戈等同志参加了资料搜集和初稿的翻译工作。

七、中共中央政治局常委、国务院副总理李岚清同志,中共上海市委副书记龚学平同志在百忙中慨允分别为本书题辞和撰写序言,使我们受到很大鼓舞,在此谨向他们两位表示敬意。

编者

1998年3月

## Notes to the Bilingual Edition

1. The Chinese version of the book *The Philosophical Maxims of 2000 Years Ago* has met with a warm welcome since it came into publication in August, 1997. It is hailed as a suitable textbook for people today to learn about the core of traditional Chinese culture, and to carry forward the fine cultural traditions handed down from history. It is believed that the book will not only serve as good morality and patriotic training material for young people, but also help foreigners to understand China and her glorious cultural tradition. It is for this reason that the compilers, in cooperation with the scholars from the Department of International Chinese Studies of the East China Normal University, offer the present edition of a bilingual version based on the Chinese original.

2. The present book contains 561 quotations from the pre-Qin philosophers edited into three parts: *On Self-Cultivation* deals with the moral standard of personality foundation and self-cultivation; *On Behavior* shows the rules of conduct in the relationship between the individual and society; *On The Way of Thinking* introduces the essence of materialism and dialectics revealed in the pre-Qin philosophy. Each of the three parts is divided into several

chapters with different themes, which are further divided into a number of topics according to their inner relations. A brief explanatory remark is given before each chapter, and a short summary is given after each topic. Those remarks and summaries, together with the introduction at the very beginning of the book, constitute an outline of the whole book and act commonly as a reading guide.

3. The quotations in this book are selected from 20 pre-Qin classics. They are: *The Book of Changes*, *The Book of History*, *The Book of Songs*, *The Book of Rites*, *The Classic of Filial Piety*, *Zuo's Commentaries*, *Discourse of the States*, *The Analects of Confucius*, *The Book of Mencius*, *The Book of Lao Zi*, *The Book of Zhuang Zi*, *The Book of Guan Zi*, *The Book of Xun Zi*, *The Book of Sun Zi*, *Yan Zi's Spring and Autumn Annals*, *The Book of Mo Zi*, *The Book of Lord Shang*, *The Book of Han Fei Zi*, *Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals*, and *The Songs of the South*. All can be found in relevant editions published by the Publishing House. Index of the quotations and brief introductions to the books are attached at the end of the book for further study of the original texts.

4. The Chinese version of the book contains a modern Chinese translation of the original texts, together with some necessary annotations to difficult words and phrases, which are not contained in the present bilingual edition to suit different readers and different demands.

5. In translating the book, three new standards of understandability, readability, and succinctness have been set up on the basis of the traditional translation theory of faithfulness, expres-

siveness, and elegance, out of the consideration that in comparing with translation done from English to Chinese, the translation from Chinese, especially classical Chinese, to English has certain peculiarities of its own, while sharing some common principles with the former. Understandability means that the translators have to understand the Chinese original thoroughly and coherently before trying to make readers of the target language understand. It is never done to present something where every word seems correctly translated, but the whole piece, when assembled together, simply makes no sense. Readability means that the difficult, sometimes awkward classical Chinese must be rendered into fluent, readable modern English with full respect to the structures of both languages, with no attempt to copy or imitate one structure at the expense of the other. Succinctness is especially important for the present translation where all the originals are brief quotations and sound like epigrams. Only when enough attention is paid to the writing style, can the same effect be reached. The present book has tried to do this.

6. The Chinese version of the present book is compiled by the staff of the Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House collectively, and the English translation is done by the Department of International Chinese Studies of East China Normal University, with Professor Pan Wenguo in full charge. Other participants include Miss Zhang Jiehua, Miss Huang Lei, Miss Xu Lai, Miss Yang Jing, and Mr Sun Ge, who did a lot of work in data-collection and tentative translation.

7. It is a great honor that Comrade Li Lanqing, member of



the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and vice-premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, and Comrade Gong Xueping, vice secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party have agreed to write an inscription and a preface for the book respectively. This is a great inspiration to the compilers and translators, who would like to take this opportunity to express their gratitude and pay tribute to the two statesmen.

March 1998