

# Key Concepts In Chinese Thought And Culture

## 中华思想文化术语 2



《中华思想文化术语》编委会 编

外语教学与研究出版社  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

泉达自然史韵点  
 玉辞自诗韵点  
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 文上帝道及神  
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 化集亥况不  
 德与  
 比物与  
 辨本  
 天卷  
 八本  
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 寒  
 海  
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 气  
 象  
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 体

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北京 BEIJING

## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

中华思想文化术语. 2 : 汉英对照 / 《中华思想文化术语》编委会编. — 北京 : 外语教学与研究出版社, 2015.10

ISBN 978-7-5135-6770-1

I. ①中… II. ①中… III. ①中华文化—术语—汉、英 IV. ①K203-61

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2015)第265223号

出版人 蔡剑峰  
责任编辑 王琳  
装帧设计 孙莉明  
出版发行 外语教学与研究出版社  
社址 北京市西三环北路19号(100089)  
网址 <http://www.fltrp.com>  
印刷 三河市北燕印装有限公司  
开本 787×1092 1/16  
印张 11  
版次 2016年1月第1版 2016年1月第1次印刷  
书号 ISBN 978-7-5135-6770-1  
定价 48.00元

购书咨询: (010) 88819929 电子邮箱: [club@fltrp.com](mailto:club@fltrp.com)

外研书店: <http://www.fltrpstore.com>

凡印刷、装订质量问题, 请联系我社印制部

联系电话: (010) 61207896 电子邮箱: [zhijian@fltrp.com](mailto:zhijian@fltrp.com)

凡侵权、盗版书籍线索, 请联系我社法律事务部

举报电话: (010) 88817519 电子邮箱: [banquan@fltrp.com](mailto:banquan@fltrp.com)

法律顾问: 立方律师事务所 刘旭东律师

中咨律师事务所 殷斌律师

物料号: 267700001

本书为国家社会科学基金重大项目“中华思想文化术语的整理、传播与数据库建设”(15ZDB003)的研究成果!

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## 前言

“中华思想文化术语”的定义可以表述为：由中华民族主体所创造或构建，凝聚、浓缩了中华哲学思想、人文精神、思维方式、价值观念，以词或短语形式固化的概念和文化核心词。它们是中华民族几千年来对自然与社会进行探索和理性思索的成果，积淀着中华民族的历史智慧，反映中华民族最深沉的精神追求以及理性思索的深度与广度；其所蕴含的人文思想、思维方式、价值观念已经作为一种“生命基因”深深融于中华子孙的血液，内化为中华民族共同的性格和信仰，并由此支撑起中华数千年的学术传统、思想文化和精神世界。它是当代中国人理解中国古代哲学思想、人文精神、思维方式、价值观念之变化乃至文学艺术、历史等各领域发展的核心关键，也是世界其他国家和民族了解当代中国、中华民族和海外华人之精神世界的钥匙。

当今世界已进入文化多元与话语多极时代。世界不同区域、不同国家、不同民族的文明，其流动融合之快、之广、之深超过历史任何时期。每个国家和民族都有自己独具的思想文化和话语体系，都应在世界文明、世界话语体系中占有一席之地，得到它应有的地位和尊重。而思想文化术语无疑是一个国家和民族话语体系中最核心、最本质的部分，是它的思想之“髓”、文化之“根”、精神之“魂”、学术之“核”。越来越多的有识之士认识到，中华思想文化蕴藏着解决当今人类所面临的许多难题的重要启示，中华民族所倡导的“厚德载物”“道法自然”“天人合



一”“和而不同”“民惟邦本”“经世致用”等思想，以及它所追求的“协和万邦”“天下一家”、世界“大同”，代表了当今世界文明的发展趋势，也因此成为国际社会的共识。越来越多的外国学者和友人对中华思想文化及其术语产生浓厚的兴趣，希望有更全面、更进一步的了解。

今天我们整理、诠释、译写、传播中华思想文化术语，目的是立足于中华传统的思想文化，通过全面系统的整理与诠释，深度挖掘其中既能反映中华哲学思想、人文精神、思维方式、价值观念、文化特征，又具跨越时空、超越国度之意义，以及富有永恒魅力与当代价值的含义和内容，并将其译成英语等语言，让世界更客观、更全面地认识中国，了解中华民族过去和现在，了解当代中国人及海外华人的精神世界，从而推动国家间的平等对话及不同文明间的交流借鉴。

中华思想文化术语的整理、诠释和英语译写得到了中国教育部、中国国际出版集团、中央编译局、北京大学、中国人民大学、武汉大学、北京外国语大学等单位的大力支持，得到了叶嘉莹、李学勤、张岂之、林茂荪等海内外众多知名学者的支持。需要说明的是，“中华思想文化术语”这个概念是首次提出，其内涵和外延还有待学界更深入的研究；而且，如此大规模地整理、诠释、译写中华思想文化术语，在中国也是首次，无成例可循。因此，我们的诠释与译写一定还有待完善的地方，我们会及时吸纳广大读者的意见，不断提高术语诠释与译写的质量。

2015年4月11日

## Foreword

By “key concepts in Chinese thought and culture” we mean concepts and keywords or phrases the Chinese people have created or come to use and that are fundamentally pertinent to Chinese philosophy, humanistic spirit, way of thinking, and values. They represent the Chinese people’s exploration of and rational thinking about nature and society over thousands of years. These concepts and expressions reflect the Chinese people’s wisdom, their profound spiritual pursuit, as well as the depth and width of their thinking. Their way of thinking, values, and philosophy embodied in these concepts have become a kind of “life gene” in Chinese culture, and have long crystallized into the common personality and beliefs of the Chinese nation. For the Chinese people today, they serve as a key to a better understanding of the evolutions of their ancient philosophy, humanistic spirit, way of thinking, and values as well as the development of Chinese literature, art, and history. For people in other countries, these concepts open the door to understanding the spiritual world of contemporary China and the Chinese people, including those living overseas.

In the era of cultural diversity and multipolar discourse today, cultures of different countries and civilizations of different peoples are integrating faster, in greater depth, and on a greater scope than ever before. All countries and peoples have their own systems of thought, culture, and discourse,

which should all have their place in the civilization and discourse systems of the world. They all deserve due respect. The concepts in thought and culture of a country and its people are naturally the most essential part of their discourse. They constitute the marrow of a nation's thought, the root of its culture, the soul of its spirit, and the core of its scholarship. More and more people of vision have come to recognize the inspirations Chinese thought and culture might offer to help resolve many difficult problems faced by mankind. The Chinese hold that a man should "have ample virtue and carry all things," "Dao operates naturally," "heaven and man are united as one," a man of virtue seeks "harmony but not uniformity," "people are the foundation of the state," and "study of ancient classics should meet present needs." The Chinese ideals such as "coexistence of all in harmony," "all the people under heaven are one family," and a world of "universal harmony" are drawing increasing attention among the international community. More and more international scholars and friends have become interested in learning and better understanding Chinese thought and culture in general, and the relevant concepts in particular.

In selecting, explaining, translating, and sharing concepts in Chinese thought and culture, we have adopted a comprehensive and systematic approach. Most of them not only reflect the characteristics of Chinese

philosophy, humanistic spirit, way of thinking, values, and culture, but also have significance and/or implications that transcend time and national boundaries, and that still fascinate present-day readers and offer them food for thought. It is hoped that the translation of these concepts into English and other languages will help people in other countries to gain a more objective and more rounded understanding of China, of its people, of its past and present, and of the spiritual world of contemporary Chinese. Such understanding should be conducive to promoting equal dialogue between China and other countries and exchanges between different civilizations.

The selection, explanation, and translation of these concepts have been made possible thanks to the support of the Ministry of Education, China International Publishing Group, the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, Peking University, Renmin University of China, Wuhan University, and Beijing Foreign Studies University, as well as the support of renowned scholars in China and abroad, including Florence Chia-ying Yeh, Li Xueqin, Zhang Qizhi, and Lin Wusun.

The idea of compiling key concepts in Chinese thought and culture represents an innovation and the project calls much research and effort both in connotation and denotation. Furthermore, an endeavor like this has not been previously attempted on such a large scale. Lack of precedents means there

must remain much room for improvement. Therefore, we welcome comments from all readers in the hope of better fulfilling this task.

April 11, 2015

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