

Noble Attributes of Chinese Civilization

A Radio Sinoland Cultural Cheat Sheet

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With Mandarin and Pinyin for language learners...

Confucius (孔子 = Kǒngzǐ, born 551BC). Means *Kong Family Scion*.

He gave us Confucism.

仁义礼智信 (rén yì lǐ zhì xìn) =

Benevolence, Righteousness, Propriety, Wisdom, Trustworthiness.

Generation Z version: Family, Friends, Fraternity, Unity.

Laozi (老子 = Lǎozǐ, born 604BC). Means *Old Child*.

He gave us Daoism.

温良恭俭让 (wēn liáng gōng jiǎn ràng) =

Gentleness, Kindness, Respect, Frugality, Humility.

Generation Z version: Cool, Calm, Collected, Chillaxed.

Mencius (孟子 = Mèngzǐ, born 371BC). Means *Meng Family Scion*.

He expounded on Confucism.

忠孝廉耻勇 (zhōng xiào liánchǐ yǒng) =

Loyalty, Filial Piety, Integrity, Shame, Courage.

Generation Z version: Honor, Hope, Humble, Helpful.

Buddha (佛陀 = Fótuó, born 480BC). Means *The Awakened One*.

He gave us Buddhism.

佛陀的三盖: 贪欲、嗔恨、无明 (Fótuó de sān gài: tān yù, chēn hèn, wú míng) =

Buddha's Three Hinderances: Desire, Anger and Ignorance.

Generation Z version: Rest, Relaxation, Respite, Repose.

Zhuangzi (庄子 = Zhuāngzǐ, born 369BC). Means *Zhuang Family Scion*.

He expounded on Daoism.

无限的本质，空无的存在，寂静的静止，心灵的交流 (wúxiàn de běnzhí, kōng wú dì cúnzài, jìjìng de jìngzhǐ, xīnlíng de jiāoliú) =

Infinite Essence, Empty Existence, Silent Stillness, Sharing Minds.

Generation Z version: Zen, baby, Zen.

Mao Zedong (毛泽东 = Máo Zédōng, born 1893). Mao is a common family name. Zedong means *Eastern Luster/Beneficence*.

He expounded on Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism + the above Five Great Philosophies, giving us Chinese Communism-Socialism.

合作、集体、协作、团结: 为人民服务! (hézuò, jíǐtǐ, xiézuò, tuánjié: WÉI RÉNMÍN FÚWÙ!) =
Cooperation, Collective, Collaboration, Cohesion:

SERVE THE PEOPLE!

Generation Z version: There is no "I" in "Team".

All six of these great philosopher-teachers espouse two fundamental concepts, *The Golden Rule and Vital Precept/Jade Laws*.

1- The Golden Rule = 金科 (Jīnkē), which is:

己所不欲，勿施于人 (jǐsuǒ bù yù, wùshī yú rén) =

What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

Very important observation: the Chinese version is in the *negative*, making it epistemologically *very* different than the Western version. Not the same thing. The prior is passive, elliptical and uber-Daoist, the latter is active, linear and invasive.

2- The Vital Precept/Jade Laws = 玉律 (Yùlǜ).

Entire books are written about the Vital Precept/Jade Laws, so I will go *Gen Z* on you, to sum it up in one sentence:

DO THE RIGHT THING!

In fact, these two concepts are almost always mentioned together:

金科玉律 (Jīnkē Yùlǜ)