

Learn Mandarin
through
Chinese Proverbs
中國諺語

“Chinese language teacher Emma Lee found a need for language books that would teach not only vocabulary, but also give a flavor of the values and culture of China. To that end, she has created *Learn Mandarin through Chinese Proverbs*, a monumental 544-page compilation.

Lee has done a remarkable job compiling these proverbs, which impart a true taste of Chinese values. But it is in her asides that students learn the most about this culture. Her brief stories of the philosophers and historical events associated with certain proverbs evoke the flavor of the culture most keenly.

Lee’s explanations of Romanization systems, pronunciation, tones, and the like are well written. Students who have begun to grasp the very basics of the language will find that *Learn Mandarin through Chinese Proverbs* offers fascinating content made user friendly, allowing them to deepen their appreciation of Chinese culture as they do their knowledge of her language.”

—*Bookwire Review*

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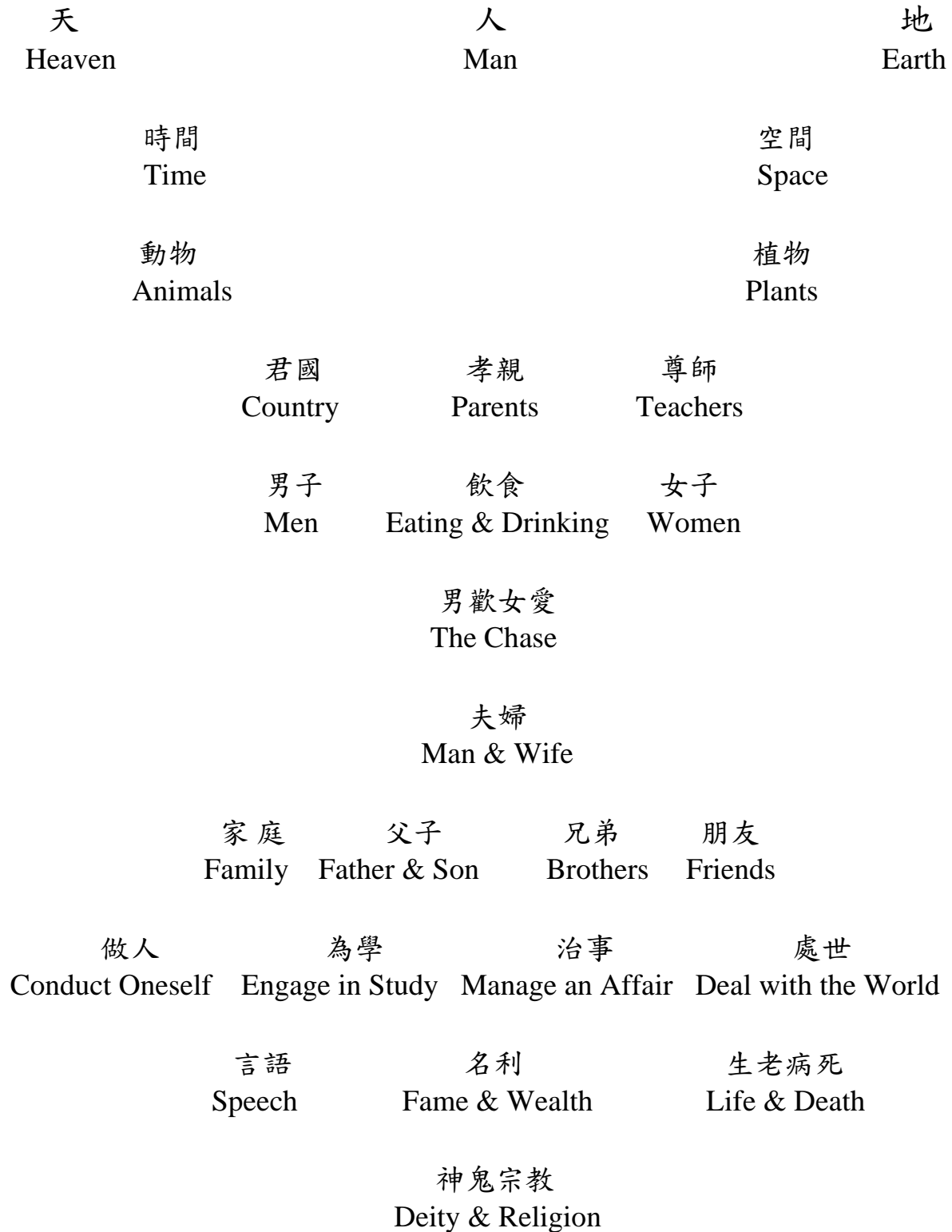
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DIAGRAM OF PROVERBS

諺語圖表



孝親篇 Parents/Filial Piety

ㄐㄩㄣ ㄓ ㄒㄩㄥˋ ㄓㄜˊ ㄕ ㄞˋ ㄗㄨㄥˊ ㄟˋ ㄓ ㄌㄨˊ ㄎㄨㄚˊ ㄇㄚˊ
 今 之 孝 者， 是 謂 能 養， 至 於 犬 馬

今 之 孝 者， 是 謂 能 養， 至 于 犬 马

jīn zhī xiào zhě shì wèi néng yǎng zhìyú quǎnmǎ

jīn jr shiào jě shr wèi néng yǎng jryú chiuǎnmǎ
 today assoc filial -er only call can feed as to dog:horse

ㄐㄩㄣ ㄗㄨㄥˊ ㄟˋ ㄓ ㄞˋ ㄎㄨㄥˊ ㄐㄩㄣˋ ㄕ ㄞˋ ㄟˋ ㄐㄩㄣˋ ㄕ ㄞˋ ㄕ
 皆 能 有 養， 不 敬， 何 以 別 乎？

皆 能 有 养， 不 敬， 何 以 别 乎？

jiē néng yǒu yǎng bú jìng hé yǐ bié hū

jiē néng yǒu yǎng bú jìng hé yǐ bié hū
 all can have feed not respect how to differentiate EP

【論語・為政篇】 Confucius said, “The filial duty of today merely means to feed one’s parents. As to dogs and horses, they are all fed to that extent. If there is no feeling of love and respect, what is the difference?”

ㄉㄨˋ ㄇㄨˊ ㄆㄨˊ ㄞˋ ㄐㄨㄥˋ ㄌㄨㄚˊ ㄟˋ ㄓ ㄞˋ ㄟˋ ㄐㄩㄣˋ ㄟˋ ㄐㄩㄣˋ ㄕ ㄞˋ ㄕ
 父 母 在， 不 遠 遊， 遊 必 有 方

父 母 在， 不 远 游， 游 必 有 方

fùmǔ zài bù yuǎn yóu yóu bì yǒu fāng

fùmǔ tzài bù yuǎn yóu yóu bì yǒu fāng
 parents exist not far travel travel must have place

【論語・里仁篇】 Confucius said, “While his parents are living, a son should not travel far; if he does, he should let them know where he goes.”

尸 ㄇㄨˋ ㄈㄨˋ ㄇㄨˋ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ ㄩˊ
事 父 母 幾 諫，見 志 不 從，又 敬 不 違；勞 而 不 怨
事 父 母 几 諫，见 志 不 从，又 敬 不 违；劳 而 不 怨

shì fùmǔ jǐjiàn jiàn zhì bùcóng yòu jìng bùwéi láo ér búyuàn

shì fùmǔ jǐjiàn jiàn zhì bùcóng yòu jìng bùwéi láo ér búyuàn
serve parents talk see mind not:follow and respect disobey worry resent

【論語·里仁篇】Confucius said, “In serving his parents, a good son may mildly remonstrate with them. If they do not listen, he should still respect them and obey them; he may worry but should not be resentful.”

ㄇㄥˋ ㄗㄩˋ ㄩㄛˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ ㄩˋ
孟 子 曰：不 孝 有 三，無 後 爲 大

孟 子 曰：不 孝 有 三，无 后 为 大

Mèngzǐ yuē bú xiào yǒu sān wú hòu wéi dà

Mèngzǐ yuē bú xiào yǒu sān wú hòu wéi dà
Mencius say not filial have three none heir be big

【孟子·離婁篇】Mencius said, “There are three major offenses against filial piety (not maintaining parents’ honor by illegal actions, not seeking a civil service position to support poor parents, and not producing an heir): the last one is the gravest offense.”

*** Even today, in 2007, Mencius’ remarks still have a great impact on Chinese society, especially in mainland China where the one child policy has impelled devastated young mothers to do the most unforgivable and unacceptable act—to abandon their baby girls in hopes of bearing an heir someday. And who would have thought that these rejected children would find their loving homes in foreign lands?

For their big hearts, generosity, and unconditional love, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to those adoptive parents of Chinese children.

尸ㄌ ㄍㄨㄛˋ ㄘㄩˋ ㄘㄨˋ ㄈㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄘㄨˋ ㄆㄨˋ ㄎㄨˋ ㄍㄨㄛˋ ㄈㄨㄛˋ ㄈㄨㄛˋ ㄊㄨㄛˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄈㄨˋ ㄟㄨㄛˋ
 身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毀傷，孝之始也
 身体发肤，受之父母，不敢毁伤，孝之始也
 shēntǐ fà fū shòu zhī fùmǔ bùgǎn huǐshāng xiào zhī shǐ yě
 shēntǐ fà fū shòu jǐ fùmǔ bùgǎn huǐshāng shiào jǐ shǐ yě
 body hair skin receive it parents not:dare damage piety assoc start EP

【孝經·開宗明義章】 The *Canon of Filial Piety* states, “We inherit our bodies from our parents, we dare not defile them. This is the beginning of filial piety.”

ㄎㄨㄛˋ ㄈㄨㄛˋ ㄊㄨㄛˋ ㄎㄨㄛˋ ㄟㄨㄛˋ ㄆㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄈㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄘㄨˋ ㄆㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ
 立身行道，揚名於後世，以顯父母，孝之終也
 立身行道，扬名于后世，以显父母，孝之终也
 lìshēn xíngdào yángmíng yú hòushì yǐ xiǎn fùmǔ xiào zhī zhōng yě
 lìshēn shíngdào yángmíng yú hòushǐ yǐ shiǎn fùmǔ shiào jǐ jūng yě
 establish do:Way fame at posterity to honor parents filial end EP

The *Canon of Filial Piety* states, “Honor your parents by practicing what you learn and making a lasting good name for yourself. This is the conclusion of filial piety.”

ㄨㄨˋ ㄟˋ ㄩㄣˋ ㄨㄟˋ ㄈㄨˋ ㄅㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ ㄕㄨˋ
 萬惡淫為首，百善孝為先
 万恶淫为 首，百善孝为 先
 wàn è yín wéi shǒu bǎi shàn xiào wéi xiān
 wàn è yín wéi shǒu bǎi shàn shiào wéi shiān
 10,000 evil lewd be head 100 virtue filial piety be first

【清·李汝珍 (1763-1830)·鏡花緣·10回】 Lewdness is the worst of all sins and filial piety is the most important of all virtues.

ㄉㄞˋ	ㄐㄚˊ	ㄐㄚˊˋ	ㄉㄨˋ ㄇㄨˋˋ	ㄏㄜˊ	ㄩㄥˋ	ㄩㄤˋˋ	ㄖㄨㄥˋ	ㄒㄩㄥˋ
在	家	敬	父 母,	何	用	遠	燒	香!
在	家	敬	父 母,	何	用	远	烧	香!
zài	jiā	jìng	fùmǔ	hé	yòng	yuǎn	shāo	xiāng
zài	jiā	jìng	fùmǔ	hé	yòng	yuǎn	shāo	xiāng
at	home	respect	parents	why	need	far	burn	incense

【兒女英雄傳・24回】 If a man always loves and respects his parents at home, there is no need for him to burn incense at faraway temples.

ㄐㄚˊ	ㄩˋˋ	ㄟˋ	ㄌㄠˋˋ	ㄏㄨㄤˋˋ ㄐㄚˊ	ㄏㄨㄛˋˋ	ㄅㄠˋˋ
家	有	一	老,	黃 金	活	寶
家	有	一	老,	黃 金	活	宝
jiā	yǒu	yì	lǎo	huángjīn	huó	bǎo
jiā	yǒu	yì	lǎo	huángjīn	huó	bǎo
house	have	one	old	yellow:gold	live	treasure

An elder at home is like harboring a living treasure.

ㄐㄨˋˋ	ㄅㄧㄥˋˋ	ㄔㄨㄤˋˋ	ㄑㄧㄢˋˋ	ㄨˋˋ	ㄒㄩㄥˋˋ ㄗㄩˋˋ
久	病	床	前	無	孝 子
久	病	床	前	无	孝 子
jiǔ	bìng	chuáng	qián	wú	xiaozǐ
jiǔ	bìng	chuáng	qián	wú	shiautz
long	illness	bed	front	none	filial son

A parent's long illness makes the son less dutiful.

ㄑㄩˊ	ㄆㄩˋ	ㄑㄩˋ	ㄦˊ	ㄒㄩˋ	ㄆㄩˋ	ㄩˊ	ㄑㄩˋ
妻	子	具	而	孝	衰	於	親
妻	子	具	而	孝	衰	于	亲
qī	zǐ	jù	ér	xiao	shuāi	yú	qīn
chī	tǐ	jiù	ér	shào	shuāi	yú	qīn
wife	child	have	and	piety	decrease	at	parents

【荀子·性惡】 When a man has a wife and children, the duty toward his parents is decreased.

ㄆㄩˋ	ㄩˋ	ㄑㄩˋ	ㄦˊ	ㄈㄨㄥ	ㄅㄨˋ	ㄓㄩˋ	ㄩˋ	ㄩˋ	ㄦˊ	ㄑㄩˋ	ㄅㄨˋ	ㄉㄞˋ		
樹	欲	靜	而	風	不	止	，	子	欲	養	而	親	不	待
树	欲	静	而	风	不	止	，	子	欲	养	而	亲	不	待
shù	yù	jìng	ér	fēng	bù	zhǐ	,	zǐ	yù	yǎng	ér	qīn	bù	dài
shù	yù	jìng	ér	fēng	bù	zhǐ	,	zǐ	yù	yǎng	ér	qīn	bù	dài
tree	want	calm	but	wind	not	stop		son	want	support		parents		wait

【漢·韓嬰 (c. 180-104 B.C.)·韓詩外傳·卷九】 The tree wants to be still but the wind keeps blowing; the son wants to take care of his parents but they are no longer in this world.