



Undergraduate assignment feedback form
(to be completed by marker)

<i>Student Name: Yichun Wang</i>	
<i>Module Code: SICH3012</i> <i>Module title: A Brief History of British Sinology</i>	<i>Student number: 2503135</i>
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☒ I have not used AI in my assignment

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

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Assessment Component 2: English Oral Presentation

Good afternoon everyone, today I want to share with you a story, again from the collectanea of ethical exemplar, called 劝夫仁恕, and that's advising one's husband to be benevolent and forgiving.

We'll focus on the reflection part today and before we start, I want to briefly introduce to you the story background.

STORY BACKGROUND

The story happened during this period in Chinese history, the Five dynasties. It's approximately a hundred years before the Norman Conquest if we look at the British history. The Five dynasties comprised of five major regimes and ten other minor regimes, and this story is about a conflict between 2 of the 10 minor regimes, Nantang and Minguo. Now you had a general idea when this story took place, I also want to introduce the 2 key words of the story.

KEY WORDS

The first one, 仁. It can be understood in 2 ways, first is defining it as a particular virtue, and translators throughout the history used different English terms to translate it, benevolence, love, altruism, goodness et cetera. And the other meaning is a general perfect virtue, which means that 仁 includes all possible virtues of a human, including such as family reverence, loyalty, courage, wisdom...In this story, it's written along with the other virtue 恕 in the title, so obviously it presents a particular virtue itself, you may refer it to benevolence, charity or compassion.

This is the second concept, 恕. It also has two interpretations in Chinese, the first one is that you're considerate, you always think about what others want and not want as you think of yourself. The other definition is to forgive others for their mistakes. In this story, 恕 is this

particular action or emotion to forgive, that's when someone done something wrong and you decided not to haggle over it.

Having these basic ideas, let's move on to the story to see how the wife is going to teach us about these two important virtues.

STORY

During the five dynasties, Huan Zhang, Huan, was a general of Minguo and was guarding Jianzhou at that time.

He leads the army to protect Jianzhou from the invasion of Nantang, their enemies. It's a hard fight so Huan send his two subordinates Bian and Wang to get help form other regimes.

Unfortunately, the two men didn't return with the reinforcements on time, so they're considered violating the military rules therefore must be beheaded. Cause they didn't complete their mission on time.

Now think about what Huan will do, it's regrettable just to kill two capable assistants but, obviously it's against law to exempt them from death.

His wife, Lian got something to say, she said, 'if you take pity on their talents, why don't you be lenient?'

Huan took his wife's advise and let the two men run away as far as possible, cause if they're caught, they'll definitely be killed as Huan is going against the rules to let them go. Huan himself will also lose prestige among his troops.

Then the two men headed directly toward the south of Yangtze River, that's the territory of Nantang, and they also took with them the gold Huan gave them so they can afford foods or shelter on their way.

Then the story jumped to months or years later, Nantang sent Zha to attack Jianzhou again.

Bian and Wang at that time were already highly esteemed among the army and were following the troops along.

This time the city, Jianzhou finally collapsed and soldiers from Nantang planned to slaughter the citizens in Jianzhou.

And you may think about what Bian and Wang will do.

Unfortunately, Huan already died at the time, but the good thing is that his wife, Lian was still alive.

So, the two men found Lian and gave her vast amounts of valuables, silks and golds in return for saving their lives, and most importantly they gave her the white banner, which eventually will keep her safe from the upcoming massacre.

Will she accept the gifts, or give them back, or keep the white banner but return the golds... Eventually she didn't accept the flag. She said, 'though I can survive, what guilt all other people in Jianzhou committed?' So, she's unwilling to drag out an ignoble existence alone while all others are going to be killed.

Then Bian and Wang went to whoever's in charge of decision making of the slaughter and request to pardon the citizens from death, which turned out everyone granted exemption, so no one's been killed.

Later, Lian was acclaimed to be the Madam of Yue and her descendants also flourished generation after generation, which they all lived a wealthy life, and held high office.

This puts an end to the whole story. Let's reflect on it.

REFLECTION

No doubt that the two qualities we saw from Lian and Huan being benevolent and forgiving are something we can learn. But what's the most important, implicated lesson behind their benevolence and forgiveness? I'll say it's 'good deeds bring good results'.

Lian, because of her wise advice telling her husband to be benevolent and forgive the two soldiers, she eventually saved two lives, so afterwards she also got the chance to survive while other people were going to be slaughtered.

Here's a summary of the two 'causes and effects' in the story that reflects the lesson of 'good deeds bring good results'.

The first one we'd just talked about is that Lian saved others' lives, so she also survived later. The second one may not be obvious, which is that at the end of the story it talked about Lian's afterlife and her family's situation. First, she got the title 'Madam of Yue'; secondly, her descendants flourished to become magnates or high officials even after she passed away.

These are all basically because of her courage and righteousness not willing to survive alone while others are killed after the war, so eventually she had saved others' lives again, but this time she saved hundreds maybe thousands of lives.

Because of her actions the citizens get to preserve their families, and as a result, her own descendants also flourished generation after generation.

In Chinese there's a saying that 'just do good, and there's no need to concern or be worried about your future'.

Why? Because it's a fact that good deeds will bring good results, it's only a matter of time for the result to show up. Don't know if you have had this sort of experience before that you've done something nice and then in your times of need you always get help from others. If you never had you may try to do it from now on. Think about how you could bring this lesson into reality.

According to this story, these are ideas you may refer to.

Be kind, to tolerate others, your grateful for others' help so others will also appreciate your assistance to them. This is exactly what Bian and Wang had done in the story; they keep in mind the mercy from Huan and eventually come back to protect his wife.

Besides, another important virtue we can learn from Lian is that to be courageous when facing justice, you choose to do what's right instead of only concerning your own interests.

And this is the most important thing, which is that your motive for going good comes from your sincerity, just like Lian. She didn't just save the whole city because she wanted honourable reputation in return, she also didn't know at the time that her family would grow strong and wealthy afterwards, she saves others' lives only because she has a sense of righteousness in her mind, so she couldn't do such thing as to watch others die.

The good things you can do in life are unlimited; these are just few precious qualities we see from the characters in the story. With these virtuous deeds you keep accumulating in your life, which benefit others, you'll gradually be able to practice this lesson in life.

That ends my presentation, I look forward to hearing any feedback from you afterwards.

Thank you.

Advising the Hunsband to be Benevolent and Forgiving

Module code: SICH3012

Module tutor: Dr Katherine Ngo

Student: Yichun Wang

Student ID number: 2503135

Date: January 7, 2026

CONTENT

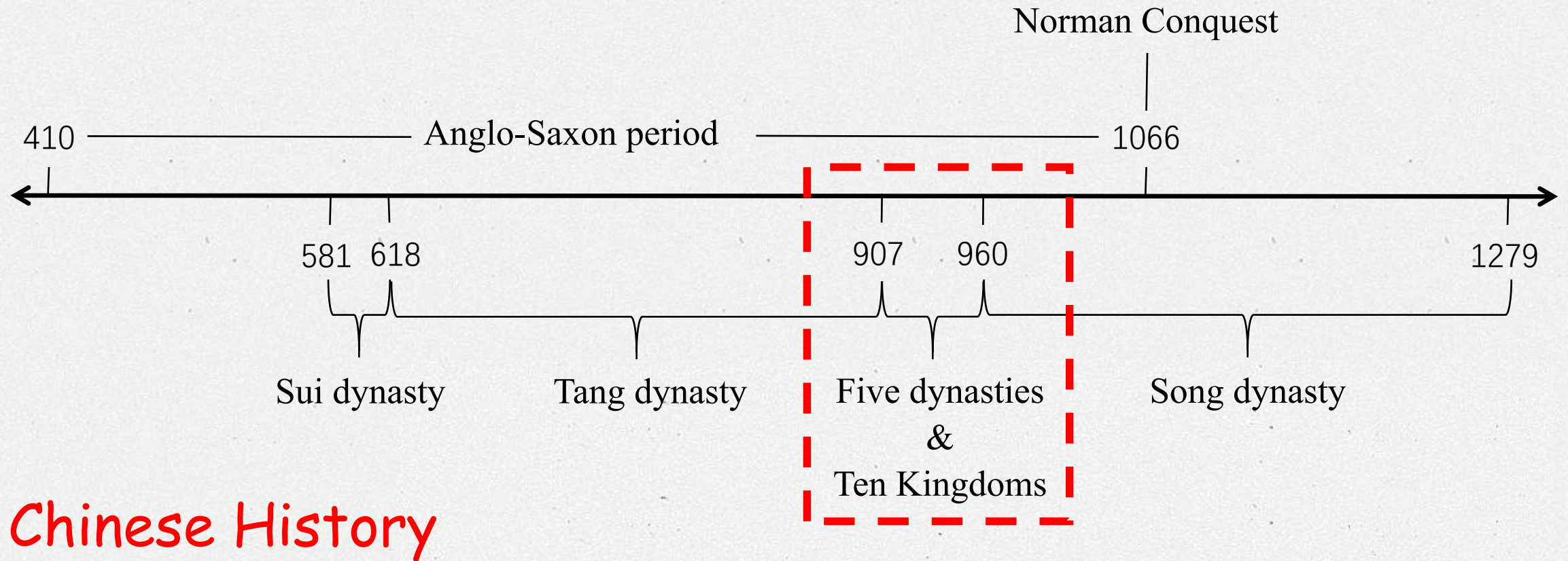
1. Story background
2. Key concepts
3. Story
4. Reflection





Story Background

British History



the Five dynasties & the Ten Kingdoms



5 major regimes



10 minor regimes

Today's China



Nantang

· Jiangsu/Anhui/Jiangxi/Henan/
Hubei Province

V.S.

Minguo

· Fujian Province

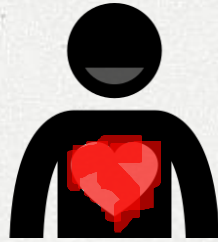


KEY CONCEPTS

Advising One's Hunsband to be
Benevolent (Ren 仁) & Forgiving (Shu 恕)

Ren 仁:

- a particular virtue:



benevolence, love, altruism, kindness, charity, compassion,
magnanimity, goodness ...

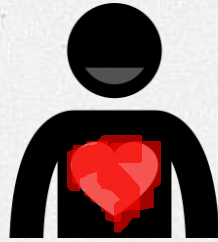
- a general virtue:
perfect virtue, Goodness ...



Advising One's Hunsband to be
Benevolent (Ren 仁) & Forgiving (Shu 恕)

Ren 仁:

- a particular virtue:



benevolence, love, altruism, kindness, charity, compassion,
magnanimity, goodness ...

- a general virtue:
perfect virtue, Goodness ...



Advising One's Hunsband to be
Benevolent (Ren 仁) & Forgiving (Shu 恕)

Shu 恕:

- be considerate:



Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself;
Do to others what you want done to yourself.

- to forgive:
exuse others for their mistakes

Advising One's Hunsband to be
Benevolent (Ren 仁) & Forgiving (Shu 恕)

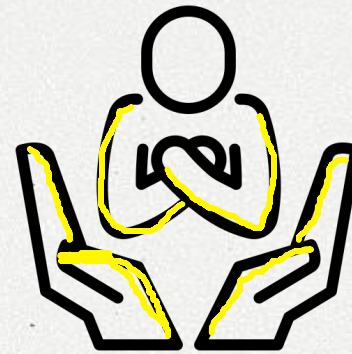
Shu 恕:

- be considerate:

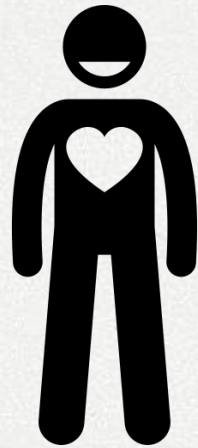


Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself;
Do to others what you want done to yourself.

- to forgive:
exuse others for their mistakes

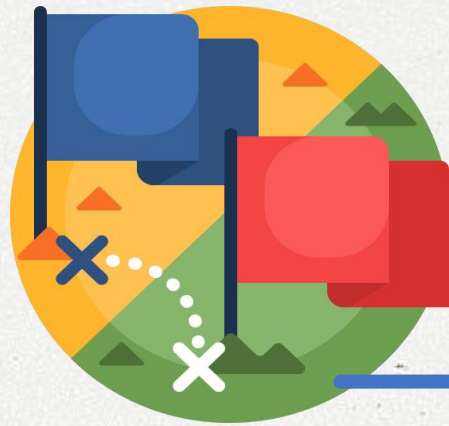


Advising the Hunsband
to be
Benevolent & Forgiving

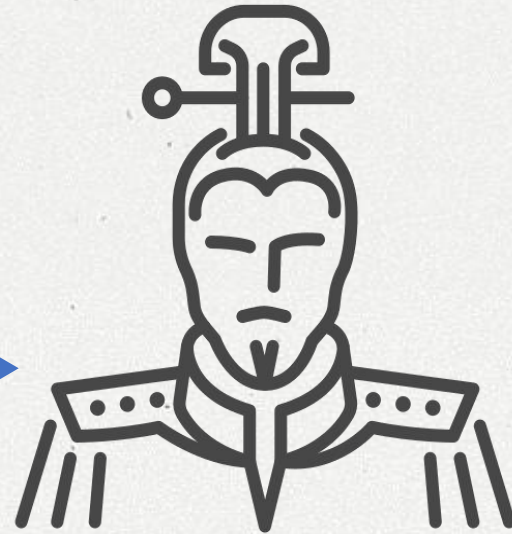


STORY

Huan Zhang 郇章 (c. 856-?), whose courtesy name is Zi Jun 子鈞, is from Pucheng of Fujian province. He serves emperor Taizu of Min 閩太祖 (862-925), also known as Wang Shen zhi 王審知, guarding Jianzhou.



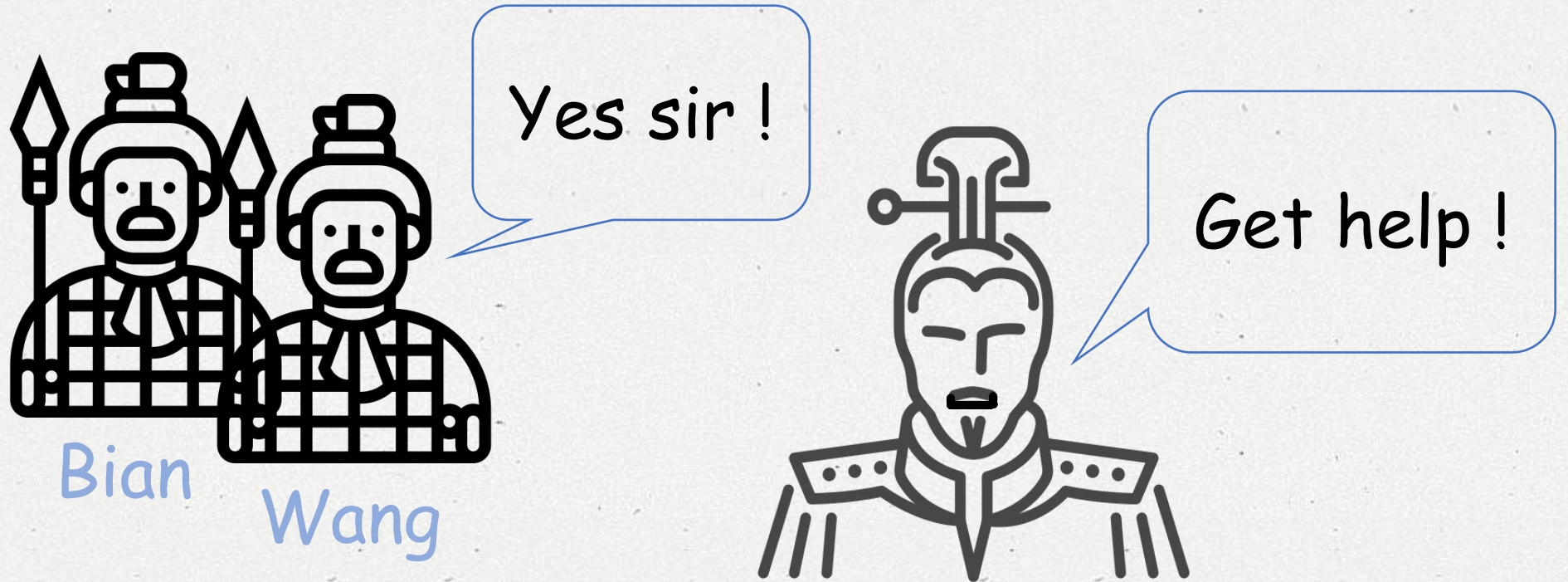
*Jianzhou,
Minguo*



Huan

STORY

He leads his army to resist [opponents from] Nantang (937-975) [a parallel regime during the same era] and sends Bian Gao 邊鎬 (?-?) and Wang Jianfeng 王建封 (?-?) to seek assistant [from other regime].



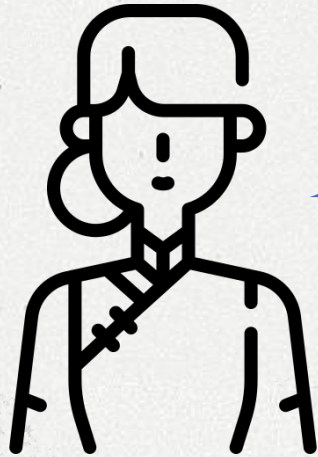
STORY

They did not return on time thus were to be beheaded [according to military law], but Huan has not made up his mind yet.



STORY

His wife Lian Juan 練鵲 (872-952): 'In as much you take pity on their talents, *why not be lenient?*'



Lian

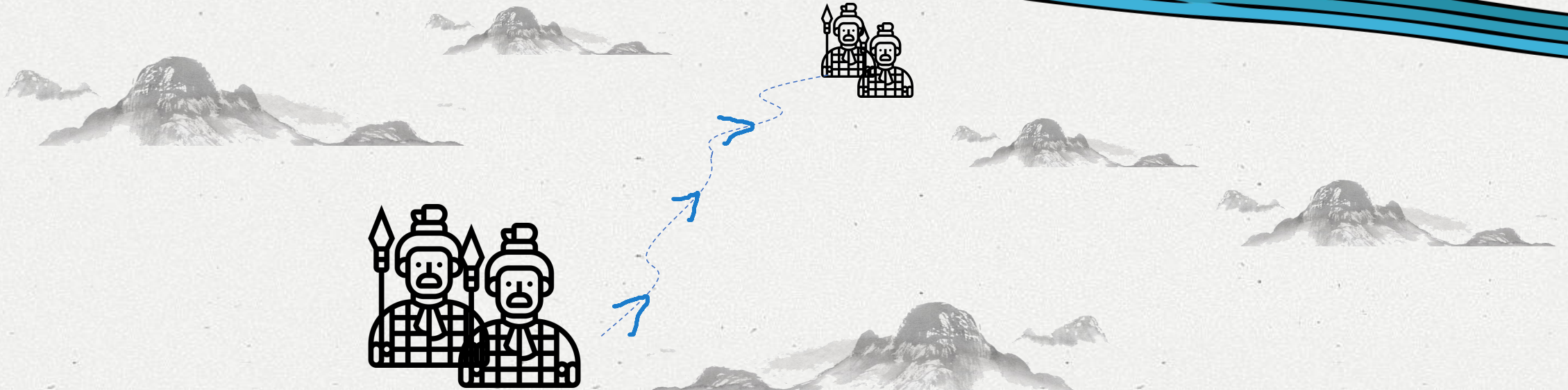
Be lenient

don't punish them

STORY

[Therefore, Huan] secretly commands them to flee to a distant place and orders his sons to offer them gold as gifts.

The two men then go directly to the region south of Yangtze River.



STORY

Later, the ruler of Nantang orders Zha Wenhui 查文徽 (c. 895-?) [to lead] to attack Jian Zhou. Bian and Wang are already highly esteemed [at that time] and are following the army along.

Few

~~2000 YEARS~~
LATER ...



STORY

The city was taken and [they] discuss massacring the citizens.

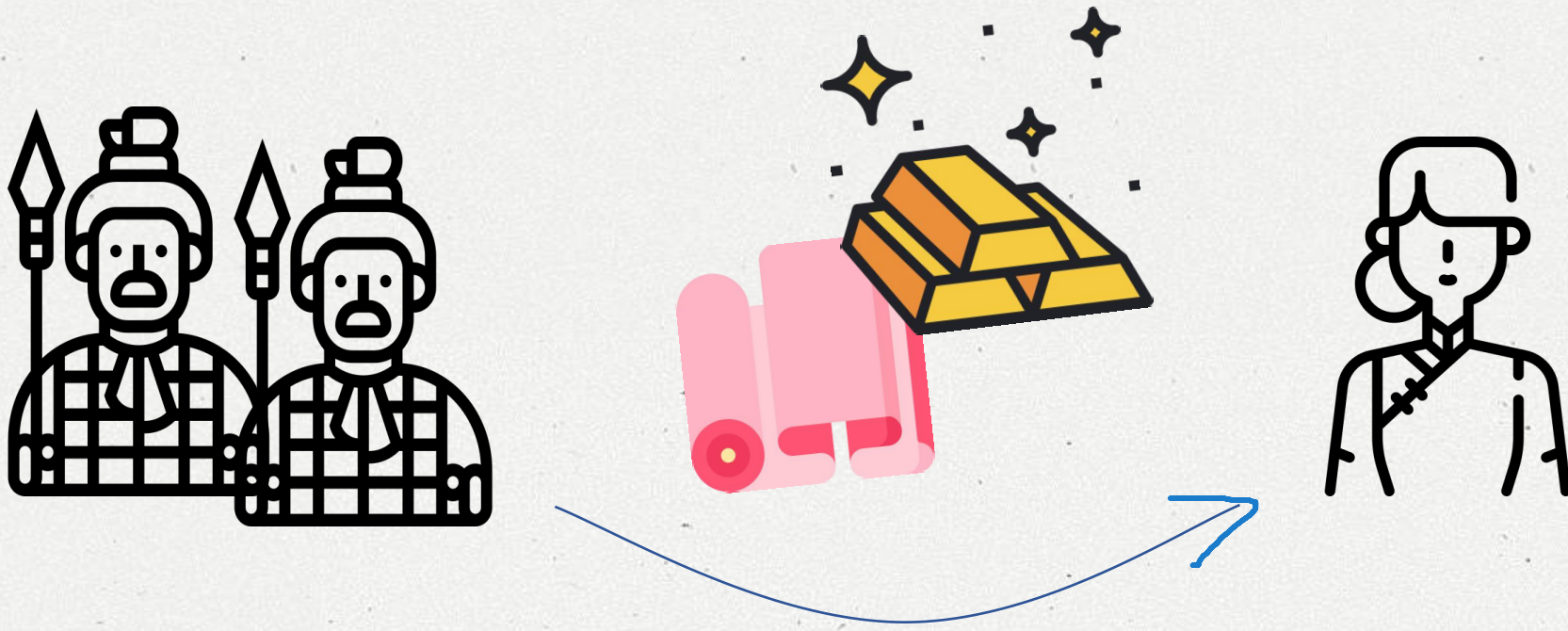


? what will Bian and Wang do ?



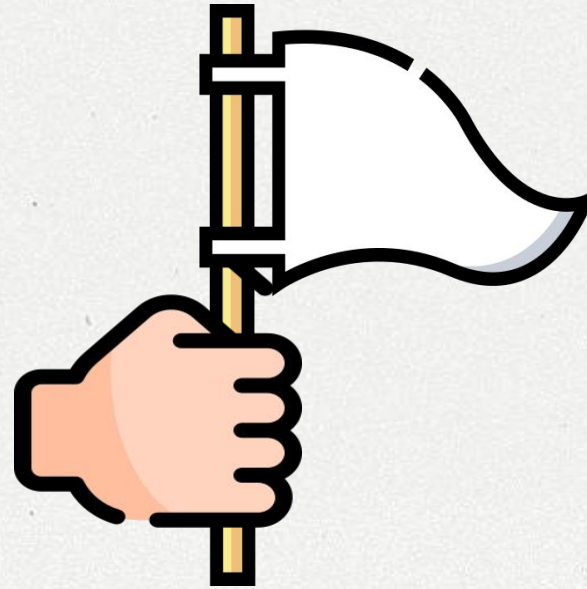
STORY

At that time, Huan had already passed away and Lian was still alive. Bian and Wang entered the city and give her great amount of gold and silk fabric as gifts.



STORY

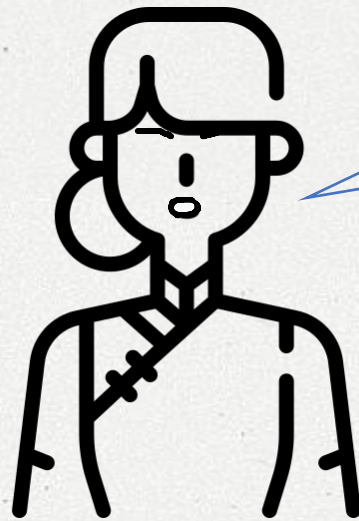
They handed over a **white banner** and said: 'put this in front of your door and you will be fine.'



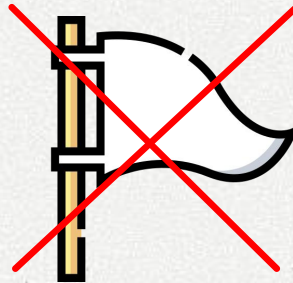
? accept the gifts / give back ?

STORY

Lian accept the golds and silk fabrics with respect but **give back the white banner** and said, 'although I am immune to death, what guilt did the people of Jian Zhou committed?
I will not survive alone if not everyone is pardoned from death.'

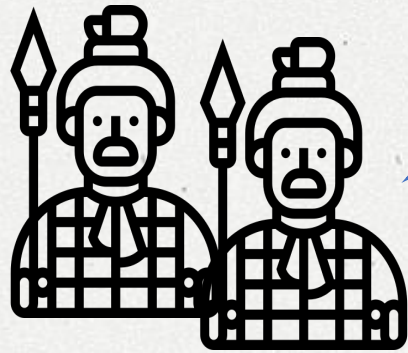


I won't survive alone to
watch others die.



STORY

Bian and Wang submit the request [to the seniors] and all people in the city granted exemption.



Don't kill them.

Fine.

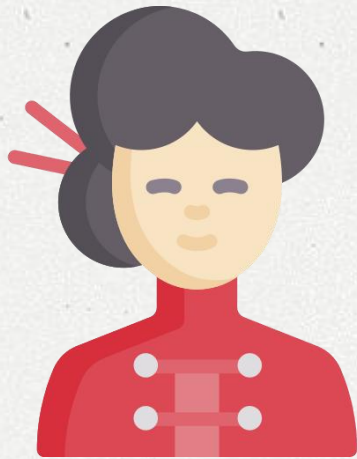


STORY

Later, Lian was entitled *Madam of Yue*.

She had fifteen descendants, eight of her own.

All sixty of her grandchildren were all of high social standings, and her grand grandchildren all became senior officials.



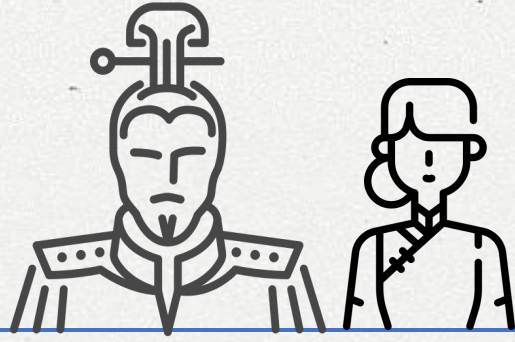
'Madam of Yue'



High officials & Status

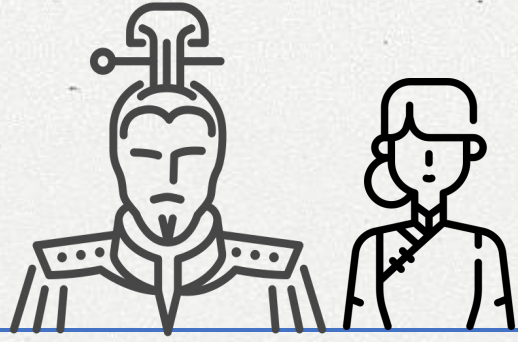


REFLECTION

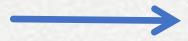


benevolent
&
forgiving





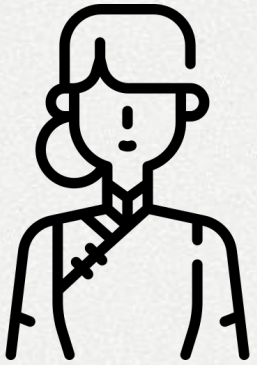
benevolent
&
forgiving



Good deeds bring good results



Good deeds bring good results



saves other's life → survive in danger

preserves others' family → own family flourished

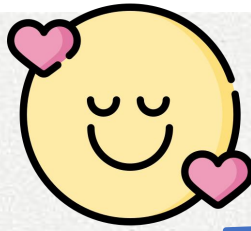
(keep the citizens safe from slaughter)

Good deeds bring good results

'Just do good, and
no need to worry
about the future.'

「但知行好事，
莫要問前程」

Zengxiu Shihua Zonggui 增修詩話總龜
(Revision of the Comprehensive
Classic of Notes on Poets and Poetry)



Good deeds bring good results

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HOW TO PRACTICE... ..

'Good deeds bring good results' ?

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'Good deeds bring good results' ?

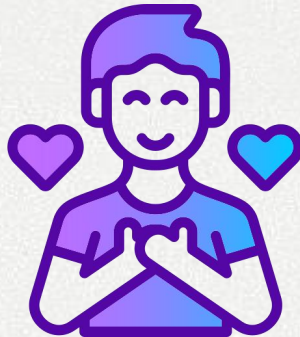
- be kind
(benevolent)



HOW TO PRACTICE... ..

'Good deeds bring good results' ?

- be kind
(benevolent)
- be grateful



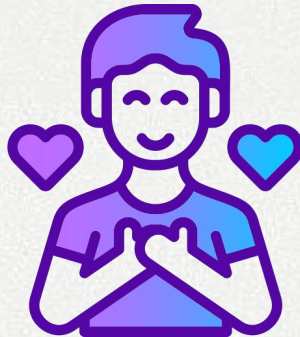
HOW TO PRACTICE... ..

'Good deeds bring good results' ?

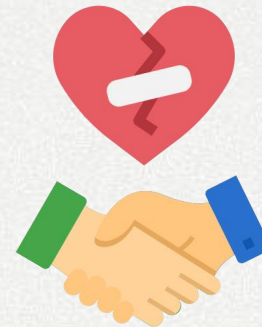
- be kind
(benevolent)



- be grateful



- tolerant others
(forgiving)



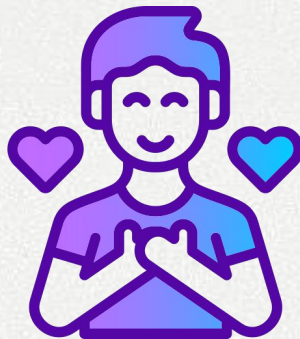
HOW TO PRACTICE... ..

'Good deeds bring good results' ?

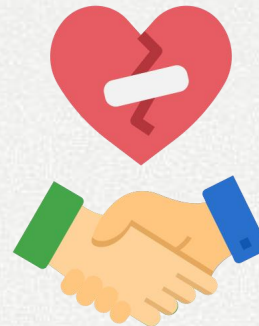
- be kind
(benevolent)



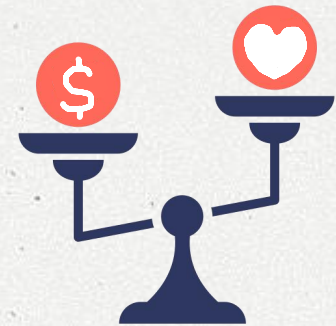
- be grateful

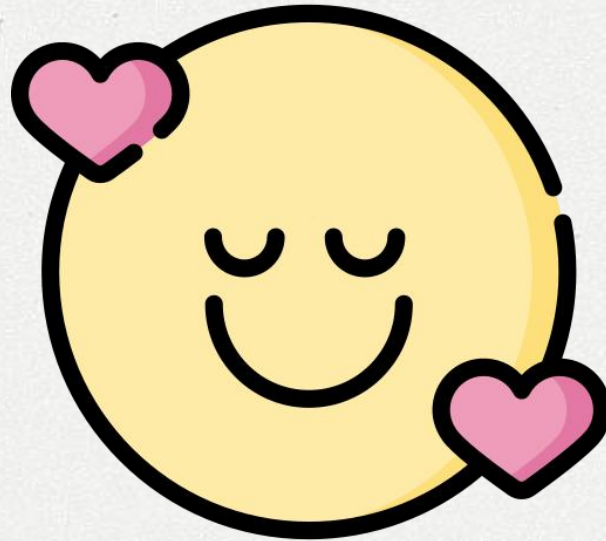


- tolerant others
(forgiving)



- have courage to do
the right thing





Good deeds bring good results



THANK YOU

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