

# Confucius and socrates



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(Assignment) Confucius and Socrates Confucius, the highly determined Chinese scholar was born in 551 BCE in the of LU. He proved himself multitalented possessing all qualities of a great thinker whose deeds greatly influenced the spiritual history of China. Confucius desired to restore the lost justice and harmony of Chinese society through his remarkable teachings throughout his lifetime. He continued his effort to establish harmony until his death at the age of 72 in 479. Socrates, the greatest of all Greek philosophers was born in a relatively poor family in Athens and spent his whole lifetime there. The financially pathetic family background did not restrict him from interacting with intellectual personalities and promoting his thoughts. Though not fully satisfied with the democracy of Athens, he always performed his duties well as a true citizen. Unfortunately, the democratic system accused him of corrupting the youth of Athens and further sentenced him to death. He accepted the death penalty without hesitation and died drinking the hemlock. Confucius believed that individuals themselves are solely responsible for their actions and behavior both individually and collectively. He had great love for his precedents for he claimed all his teachings had been derived from the ancients rather than his own perspectives (Confucius. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Confucius admired heaven and its blessings on mankind. Confucius maintained respect for spiritual forces and considered them worth worship. He emphasized on the significance of social behavior and considered love, affection, and concern for others as essentials of virtuous life. He also proposed concern for parents and siblings as qualities of discipline. Confucius believed that a ruler should possess the commendable qualities of discipline, love, concern in order to be a role model to his subjects. He valued virtue and uniformity which are

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attained through the practice of ritual propriety would do better than the punishments awarded to sinners. Hence the teachings of Confucius influenced significant number of population across the ancient China. “Confucianism was practiced as discipline of training government officials until the establishment of Republic” (Handbook of Today’s Religions. : Confucianism). His teachings were of great influence on his followers that they erected temples and shrines for him. Socrates, as a philosopher believed that the basis for an individual’s intelligence is self assessment and examination. He always assisted people in their trouble and shared his thoughts with them. He compared himself to midwives and termed himself as barren. He put forward questions some of which were even unanswerable by Socrates himself; he was often accused for raising such questions. However, the philosophical thoughts of Socrates often benefited in one or other way every individual who conversed with him. Socrates proposed knowledge through concepts or by definition which persuades one to admit oneself as ignorant and then go back to learn the key concepts of what one desires to learn (Biographies: Socrates). He also explained the significance of piety and morality and the necessity of their knowledge. His thoughts were sometimes considered as misleading the aristocratic youth about which there was no clear evidence or argument. Like the doctrines of Confucius, Socrates’ thoughts were also highly motivating and could be attributed to the emergence of the entire Western philosophy. Works Cited Biographies: Socrates. Sep 20, 2004. Web 21 March 2011 Confucius. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Sep 5, 2006. Web 21 March 2011 Handbook of Today’s Religions : Confucianism. n. d., web 21 March 2011