

Confusianism



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Confucianism A philosopher named Confucius founded Confucianism in China 2, 500 years ago. Confucianism is a system of ethical behavior and social responsibility that became the great traditions of the East. 1 It played an important role in the evolution in Chinese culture over the centuries. It has influenced near-by countries and had made a mark in the history of religion. There are today over six million people who call themselves Confucianists. Most Confucianists live in East Asia where Confucianism is thought to be born. For over two thousand years, Confucianism has been the dominant philosophical system of Chinese government, which has still a great hold on their people.

Because Chinese culture has spread to the counties of Vietnam, Korea, and Japan, the values of Confucianism can be found there too. Confucius was born in 551 BC in the village of Zou in the country of Lu. During that time, the Zhou dynasty was in decline-this was controlled by King Zhou. As a child, Confucius would have make-believe rituals; as a young adult he quickly earned a reputation for politeness, fairness and had a love for learning. He traveled often and studied at the imperial capital, Zhou, where legend has it he spoke with Lao Zi, the leader of Daoism.

When Confucius returned to Lu, he became a renowned teacher. At the age of 35, Confucius followed Duke Zhao into war. Duke Zhao was later captured and Confucius again followed. Zhao often went to Confucius for advice, but was later advised not to by one of his advisors. Eventually Zhao stopped going to him for advice and Confucius returned to Lu. When he returned, he saw that conditions have been unchanged so he retired from public life to

concentrate on teaching and studying. At the age of 50, he was asked to lead a defense against a rebellion, but he declined.

Although he did not lead in war, he later became City Magistrate. Throughout his governmental career, he was promoted several times. Later he became Grand Secretary of Justice and, at age 56, he became Chief Minister of Lu. Because of Confucius' increasing power, many nearby countries became worried that Lu would over power them. They sent messengers with gifts and dancers to distract the Duke during a sacrifice holiday and the Duke later abandoned his duties. When Confucius received word of this, he resigned and left the country. Confucius spent the next five years of his life wandering China with his disciples until he was able to send messenger to the sympathetic king of a nearby country, who sent his own band of soldiers to rescue them 2.

At the age of 67, Confucius returned to Lu where he spent the rest of his years teaching until he died at 72. Teachings The teaching of Confucius still has a great effect on the culture of China today. His followers wrote down all of his teachings after his death and have been translated into many different languages so that the entire world may benefit from them. Below are some examples from the Analects, Book 4. Roger T.

Ames: The Master said, " The authoritative person (ren) alone has the wherewithal to properly discriminate the good person from the bad." E.

Bruce Books: The Master said, It is only the rvn who can like others; who can hate others. Page 2 Lionel Giles: Only he who has the spirit of goodness

within him is able either to love or to hate. David Hilton: The master said: "

Only the Human can love people, and only they can despise people."

Chichung Huang: The master said: " Only a humane man is capable of loving man and capable of loathing men." James Legge: The Master said: " It is only the virtuous man, who can love, or who can hate, others." Simon Leys: The Master said: " Only a good man can love people and can hate people." Lin Yutang: Confucius said, " Only a true man knows how to love people and to hate people." A. Charles Muller: Confucius said; " Only the jen person is able to really like others or to really dislike them.

Ezra Pound (1): He said: Only the complete man can love others, or hate them. Xin Guanjie: Confucius said; " Only a benevolent man is able to tell whom to love and whom to hate." 3 As you can see most of his teachings taught about loving people and that people should not hate one another. His main teachings dealt with education. He believed that through education; anyone could reach his or her goal. He taught people to be gentlemen.

A gentleman was defined as a person who developed the five virtues of courtesy, Page 3 magnanimity, good faith, diligence, and kindness. To Confucius, government service was the highest calling of all, because good government would bring happiness to all people 4. Before Confucianism When Confucius was born in 551 BC, the Zhou dynasty was in decline. The Zhou King only controlled a small area around his capital, Luoyang where most of the religious ceremonies were performed. 5 The rest of China was divided into states where the rulers would be called lords. The birthplace of Confucius, Lu, was not powerful enough to overthrow the king, nor any other state.

Because the emperors used force to control, many states tried to rebel against the government and always failed. They would often fail because they would always have opposition from the other states and thus effected the balance of power. The major religion at the time was Daoism, which is the most important native philosophy of China. Its legendary founder was Laozi, who, according to tradition, was an older contemporary of Confucius. After Confucianism In his later years Confucius founded a church and taught people to be gentlemen.

He believed that over time they would become officials in government and could change society. 6 He gave his students practical teaching in the arts - rituals, writing, music, archery, chariot driving, and mathematics. His greatest concern was to produce men of character, which would change society for the better. After his death, his disciples called this way of life Confucianism, which was named after their leader Confucius. 7 Before Page 4 long, the disciples were able to gain enough votes to change the state charter in Lu to Confucianism. Soon other Chinese states saw the success Confucianism brought to Lu and changed their charters as well. After Confucianism has gone into effect, China has never been better.

Crime was lowered, it had a growing economy, and the all around quality of life was better. Confucianism as Compared to Other Religions Although Confucianism is not considered a religion, it is very similar to one. The main likeness is that they both deal with moral values and to live a good life. Confucianism does not have a church nor any priests, but they do have governmental leaders and places for special ceremonies. 8 Instead of prophets, their leaders are called sages (or people who had made a major

contribution to the religion's history or formation). Confucianism is a whole way of life that includes having the government follow the rules and rituals.

Confucianism deals with the way people should live and act and requires no sacrifices or worshipping. Other religions, such as Christianity, deal with rules and certain sacrifices that have to be made in order to go to heaven, or to reach other ways to be one with the creator. Confucianism has always allowed different types of religious worship and is not forced upon people. They both want the well being of the people who follow their guidelines. In religion, they want the well being of the people even if it means breaking the law.

In Confucianism the most respect a person can get is those who follow the law and respect all government leaders. Page 5 Confucianism under Communism At the end of WWII, civil war broke out between Chiang's Nationalist government and Communist Chinese rebels led by Mao Zedong. 9 Communists won the war in 1949 and established the People's Republic of China. Mao had no sympathy for Confucianism and vowed to abolish it in all its forms. Mao accused Confucius of having a "feudal mentality", and helped a small group of people take for themselves a wealth of society. He was also accused of being responsible for the conditions the country and his ethics were called a "slave morality".

This kept women subordinate to their husbands and gave authority to abusive parents. Part of Mao's anti-Confucius program was to end the traditional family system. Arranged marriages were banned, as men and women had equal rites, and both sexes could obtain a divorce. All of the

power the father had was ended. In school, tales of filial piety were replaced by slogans advocating loyalty to the state. 10 Respect for the elderly had also vanished.

Mao made himself emperor, which replaced the idle ruler of Confucianism. He showed the same amount of pride in his calligraphy as the scholar of the old. Although he went against many of the Confucian books, he still did understand the importance of the written word. He had a Red Book, or what was called a collection of Mao's thoughts, which contained his own revolutionary maxims. Anyone seeking to become an official in Mao's China had to know Mao's book as thoroughly as the candidates for the original book, the Five Classics. As a guide for daily life, the Red Book was carried and studied by all of Mao's "subjects".

Marxist ideology, as interpreted by Mao, became the basis for Page 6 a new system of ethics. Study groups in every town and village replaced the family as the enforcers of the social structure. Mao even adopted the Confucian world-view of China as the teacher of other nations. He broke with the Soviet Union over differences in Marxist ideology, and sought to spread his brand of Marxism to other nations in Asia and Africa. After Mao's death in 1976, the new Chinese rulers have brought back the old Confucian traditions.

They have restored the temples, altars, and other places that are a part of Confucian civilization. Benefits of Confucianism The benefits of Confucianism are better than the original form of government that China had before. There is now much better organization and the public is now more under control than it has been before. The financial market has been up since the arrival of

Confucianism. People are happier with their lives, and seek to be a better person in the field of government.

In factories, cooperation is the motto and no person in management makes a decision without first talking to the workers. Every day the workers sing a song to signify a type of family that they are in. Workers will often work over time and often miss vacations to get the job done on time. Respecting elders is not limited to the family; all people respect one another, which has lowered crime rates over the year. The people seek a balance between nature and humankind. Confucius' teachings still have an effect on the whole world.

People in China especially still honor Confucius teachings and ceremonies today. Some ceremonies include Confucius's birthday, which is celebrated annually in Hong Kong on September 28. On this holiday, all teachers are honored for carrying the tradition of the "Teacher of All Generations". Special services including dances dating from the Ming Dynasty, are conducted at the many Confucian temples on the island. In June, Taiwan's Dragon Boat Festival commemorates the death, in 299 BCE, of the Confucian diplomat Chu Yuan, who drowned himself to call attention to unheeded demands for government reform. Quotes: Page 8 History Essays.