

Confucius

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[[pic]One of the most famous people in ancient China was a wise philosopher
named Confucius (circa 551-479 BC).

He sometimes went by the names Kong Zi though he was born – Kong Qiu –
styled Zhong Ni. He was born in the village of Zou in the country of Lu.

[pic]This chinese man was a well-known leader in philosophy and he also
made many wise phrases and theories about the law, life, and the
government. Philosophy is a kind of a system of ideas and thoughts that talk
about the humans behavior, the rules that you should follow to make a
successful life, and about the government. In other words, its about thoughts
and theories that teach other people lessons about principles, or rules, about
life and it also teaches you a moral (sort of like the morals that are at the
end of a fable). Confucius is famous for his philosophy because he made
many wise sayings in ancient China that helped many people learn about
nature, the world, and the human behavior. He also helped the government
and the emperor by teaching them lessons on how the emperor should rule
his kingdom successfully. Confucius was born in a poor family in the year
551 B.

C., and he was born in the state of Lu. His original name was Kung Chiu.

His father, commander of a district in Lu, died three years after Confucius
was born, leaving the family in poverty; but Confucius nevertheless received
a fine education. He was married at the age of 19 and had one son and two
daughters. He worked as a keeper of a market.

Then he was a farm worker who took care of parks and farm animals. When he was 20, he worked for the governor of his district.[pic]His mother died in 527 BC, and after a period of mourning he began his career as a teacher, usually traveling about and instructing the small body of disciples that had gathered around him. His fame as a man of learning and character and his reverence for Chinese ideals and customs soon spread through the principality of Lu.

Living as he did in the second half of the Zhou (Chou) dynasty (1027-256 BC), when feudalism degenerated in China and intrigue and vice were rampant, Confucius deplored the contemporary disorder and lack of moral standards. He came to believe that the only remedy was to convert people once more to the principles and precepts of the sages of antiquity. He therefore lectured to his pupils on the ancient classics. Confucius taught in his school for many years. His theories and principles were spread throughout China by his disciples, and soon many people learned from his wise sayings.

One of his rules said, "If you governed your province well and treat your people kindly, your kingdom shall not lose any war. If you govern selfishly to your people, your kingdom will not only lose a war, but your people will break away from your kingdom." He had also said a wise phrase called the golden rule that is still being used as a rule today. It said, "A man should practice what he preaches, but a man should also preach what he practices.

"One day, his students and he passed a grave where they saw a woman weeping at a gravestone. She told Confucius that her husband, her husband's

father, and her son were killed by a tiger. When Confucius asked her why she didn't leave such a fated spot, she answered that in this place there was no oppressive government. Confucius said, "Remember this, my child. An oppressive government is fiercer and more feared than a tiger." That meant that the government in the woman's province did not rule the province well. So Confucius said that the government was more feared than a tiger. This was one of the many events he had to give a person a lesson.

[pic]He taught the great value of the power of example. Rulers, he said, can be great only if they themselves lead exemplary lives, and were they willing to be guided by moral principles, their states would inevitably become prosperous and happy. Confucius had, however, no opportunity to put his theories to a public test until, at the age of 52, he was appointed magistrate of Chung-tu, and the next year minister of crime of the state of Lu. His administration was successful; reforms were introduced, justice was fairly dispensed, and crime was almost eliminated. So powerful did Lu become that the ruler of a neighboring state maneuvered to secure the minister's dismissal. Confucius left his office in 496 BC, traveling about and teaching, vainly hoping that some other prince would allow him to undertake measures of reform. In 484 BC, after a fruitless search for an ideal ruler, he returned for the last time to Lu.

Confucius was then abandoned from his province and he wandered about China for 13 years. When Confucius was 69 years old, he returned to Lu, his home state, and he died there 3 years after settling in Lu – 479 BC. After Confucius died, he was buried in a grave in the city of ChuFu, Shandong.

Today the site of his final resting place is the beautiful Kung Forest. Yet, when the philosopher died, many people honored all of Confucius work by building temples in every city in China to honor Confucius.

Since Confucius teachings and philosophy was so advanced, it was the education for China for 2, 000 years. It is called Confucianism. Confucius himself had a simple moral and political teaching: to love others; to honor ones parents; to do what is right instead of what is of advantage; to practice “ reciprocity,” i. e. “ dont do to others what you would not want yourself”; to rule by moral example (de) instead of by force and violence; and so forth. Confucius thought that a ruler who had to resort to force had already failed as a ruler.

“ Your job is to govern, not to kill” Confucius did not put into writing the principles of his philosophy; these were handed down only through his disciples. The Lun Yu (Analects), a work compiled by some of his disciples, is considered the most reliable source of information about his life and teachings. One of the historical works that he is said to have compiled and edited, the Chun Chiu (Spring and Autumn Annals), is an annalistic account of Chinese history in the state of Lu from 722 to 481 BC. In learning he wished to be known as a transmitter rather than as a creator, and he therefore revived the study of the ancient books. His own teachings, together with those of his main disciples, are found in the Shih Shu (Four Books) of Confucian literature, which became the textbooks of later Chinese generations.- Encyclopedia Britannica[pic]ConfuciusConfucius “ Master Kung,” (551 BCE – 479 BCE) was a Chinese thinker and social philosopher,

whose teachings and philosophy have deeply influenced Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese thought and life.

His philosophy emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity. These values gained prominence in China over other doctrines, such as Legalism or Taoism during the Han Dynasty. Confucius thoughts have been developed into a system of philosophy known as Confucianism. It was introduced to Europe by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci, who was the first to Latinise the name as “ Confucius.” His teachings may be found in the Analects of Confucius, a collection of “ brief aphoristic fragments”, which was compiled many years after his death.

Modern historians do not believe that any specific documents can be said to have been written by Confucius, but for nearly 2, 000 years he was thought to be the editor or author of all the Five Classics such as the Classic of Rites (editor), and the Spring and Autumn Annals (author). What seems a matter of tiny importance has been long commented on and shows another of the Confucian specificities that have to be underlined. When one knows that in his time horses were perhaps ten times more expensive than stablemen, one can understand that, by not asking about the horses, Confucius demonstrated his greatest priority: human beings. Thus, when one sees a little bit of the greater picture, according to many ancient or recent Eastern and Western commentators, Confucius teaching can be considered a noteworthy Chinese variant of humanism. Confucius also heavily emphasized what he calls “ rites and music,” referring to these social conventions as two

poles to balance order and harmony. While rites, in short, show off social hierarchies, music unifies hearts in shared enjoyment.

He added that rites are not only the way to arrange sacrificial tools, and music is not only the sound of stick on bell. Both are mutual communication between someones humanity and his social context, both feed social relationships, like the five prototypes: between father and son, husband and wife, prince and subject, elder and youngster, and between friends. Duties are always balanced and if a subject must obey his ruler, he also has to tell him when he is wrong. Confucius teachings have been turned later into a corps de doctrine by his numerous disciples and followers.

In the centuries after his death, Mencius and Xun Zi both wrote a prominent book on these, and with time a philosophy has been elaborated, which is known in the West as Confucianism. Although Confucianism is often followed in a religious manner by the Chinese, argument continues over whether to refer to it as a religion because it makes little reference to theological or spiritual matters (God(s), the afterlife, etc.). Confucius's principles gained wide acceptance primarily because of their basis in common Chinese opinion. He championed strong familial loyalty, ancestor worship, and respect of elders by their children and of husbands by their wives, and used the family as a basis for an ideal government. He expressed the well-known principle, “ Do not to others what you do not want done to yourself” (the Golden Rule). He also looked nostalgically upon earlier days, and urged the Chinese, particularly the politicians, to model themselves on earlier examples – although whether or not older rulers had governed by Confucian

standards is dubious. Confucius political thought is based upon his ethical thought.

He argues that the best government is one that rules through “rites” and peoples natural morality, rather than using bribery and force. He explained this in one of the most important analects:” If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.” This “sense of shame” is somewhat an internalization of duty, where the punishment precedes the evil action, instead of following it in the form of laws as in Legalism. While he supported the idea of the all-powerful Emperor, probably because of the chaotic state of China at his time, his philosophies contained a number of elements to limit the power of the rulers. He argued for according language with truth – thus honesty was of the most paramount importance. Even in facial expression, one sought always to achieve this. In discussing the relationship between a son and his father (or a subject and his king), he underlined the need to give due respect to superiors; this demanded that the inferior must give advice to his superior if the superior was considered to be taking the wrong course of action in a given situation. This was built upon by his disciple Mencius to argue that if the king was not acting like a king, he would lose the Mandate of Heaven and be overthrown. Therefore, tyrannicide is justified because a tyrant is more a thief than a king (but attempted tyrannicide is not). Confucius philosophical school was first

continued by his direct disciples and by his grandson Zisi. Mencius and Xun Zi are his two great followers, one on each “ side” of his philosophy, perhaps simply described as optimism and pessimism. They built upon and expanded his ethico-political system. Soon after Confucius death, Qufu, his hometown, became a place of devotion and remembrance. It is still a major destination for cultural tourism, and many Chinese people visit his grave and the surrounding temples.

In China, there are many temples where one can find representations of Buddha, Lao Zi and Confucius together. There are also many temples dedicated to him which have been used for Confucianist ceremonies.

Confucious: References and Links Famous Saying Virtue is not left to stand alone. He who practices it will have.

They must often change, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom. It is not possible for one to teach others who cannot teach his own family. The superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in his actions. He who merely knows right principles is not equal to him who loves them. To be able under all circumstances to practice five things constitutes perfect virtue; these five things are gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness and kindness. We dont know yet about life, how can we know about death Mankind differs from the animals only by a little, and most people throw that away. If you enjoy what you do, youll never work another day in your life.

The Master said, (the good man) does not grieve that other people do not recognize his merits. His only anxiety is lest he should fail to recognize theirs.