

Asian philosophy



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Prior to the unification of China during the Qin dynasty in 221 B. C. E., which brought to an end the orthodox period of Chinese philosophy, Confucianism had one last remarkable proponent, Xunzi, whose thoughts embodies the greatest development of the discipline in the period of the Warring States. Whereas the ideas of Kongzi and Mengzi are preserved merely in little by little sayings, Xunzi's ideas have been carried to the present in the form of strongly constructed treatises that provide continued discussion of several subject matters and along represent an extraordinarily logical system of arguments (Ivanhoe, 2002). Even though his writing is not to a certain extent vibrant and colorful that of Zhuangzi, his approach is much well-designed and powerful, sometimes bursting into poetry that influentially expresses his infatuation for the Confucian way of life (ibid).

A great part of Xunzi's attempt is committed to passionately defending Confucianism against different challenges. For instance, he fervently expresses disapproval of Mozi's denouncement of ritual and music and claims forcefully that these cultural types are completely indispensable. He also rejects Laozi and Zhuangzi for supporting that people accept the perspective of Heaven and leave out traditional virtues in favor of submitting to the natural torrent of things (Ivanhoe, 2001).

For Xunzi, the hazards to Confucianism originate not merely external to the tradition, but as well as from within it, in the appearance of Mengzi's principle that human nature is good. In Xunzi's judgment, such an argument weakens the power of ritual as a practical guideline to behavior, ruins the essentiality of acquiring knowledge, and merely flies in front of the facts.

Xunzi makes the contradictory assertion that human nature is bad, but this should not be interpreted as claiming that people in nature take pleasure in

evil deeds (ibid). Rather, his emphasis is that people lack any innate path to right behavior and conduct, and that without the outside control of ritual they will resort into bad behavior and be reduced to a disordered, impoverished condition strongly suggestive of the state of nature portrayed by Thomas Hobbes (Ivanhoe, 2001).

On the other hand, Mengzi contends that humans have a nature, which they should go after. Indeed, he contradicts Xunzi's philosophy for suggesting that ethical nurturing must integrate transgressing one's nature. Nevertheless, Mengzi argues against the idea that there are developing righteous predispositions in one's nature. He often illustrates these predispositions using an allegory of 'sprouts' and evaluates ethical nurturance to taking care of these 'sprouts' (Ivanhoe, 2002, 85).

Mengzi explains different kinds of evidence for the presence of ethical 'sprouts' (ibid) in humans, involving the good deal conducts of adults who naturally demonstrate these predispositions whose empathy for an ox being forced to slaughter shows his emerging compassion and thought trials such as questioning what institutions are about how an ordinary human would respond to the sight of a child about to fall into a cliff, or to the sight of the dead bodies of beloveds rotting by the pavements (Ivanhoe, 2002).

In his own period, Xunzi was a famous scholar and was even granted high office at some stage of his life. Among his followers were Han Feizi and Li Si, who was influential in ushering about the Qin state's supremacy of China. Xunzi may even have survived to tell the tale of this event. Other supporters of his were accountable for preserving traditional Chinese texts (Ivanhoe, 2001).

In spite of Xunzi's significant position in ancient Chinese scholastic history,

when Mengzi's insights later became favored, Xunzi was declined for arguing that human nature is bad, and his writings were significantly abandoned for centuries. In the contemporary world, however, there has been a restoration of intellectual enthusiasm in Xunzi, and he is once more receiving the consideration he ought to have (ibid).

Works Cited

Ivanhoe, P. J. (2002). *Ethics in the Confucian Tradition*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

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