

# **CONFUCIANISM** **and its** **EDUCATIONAL** **IMPLICATIONS**

a lecture by Emely D. Dicolon, Ph.D.

# Definition, Beliefs, History

- Kindness
- Mutual respect
- Virtues
- Society can flourish when people learn to interact positively with each other



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# CONFUCIUS

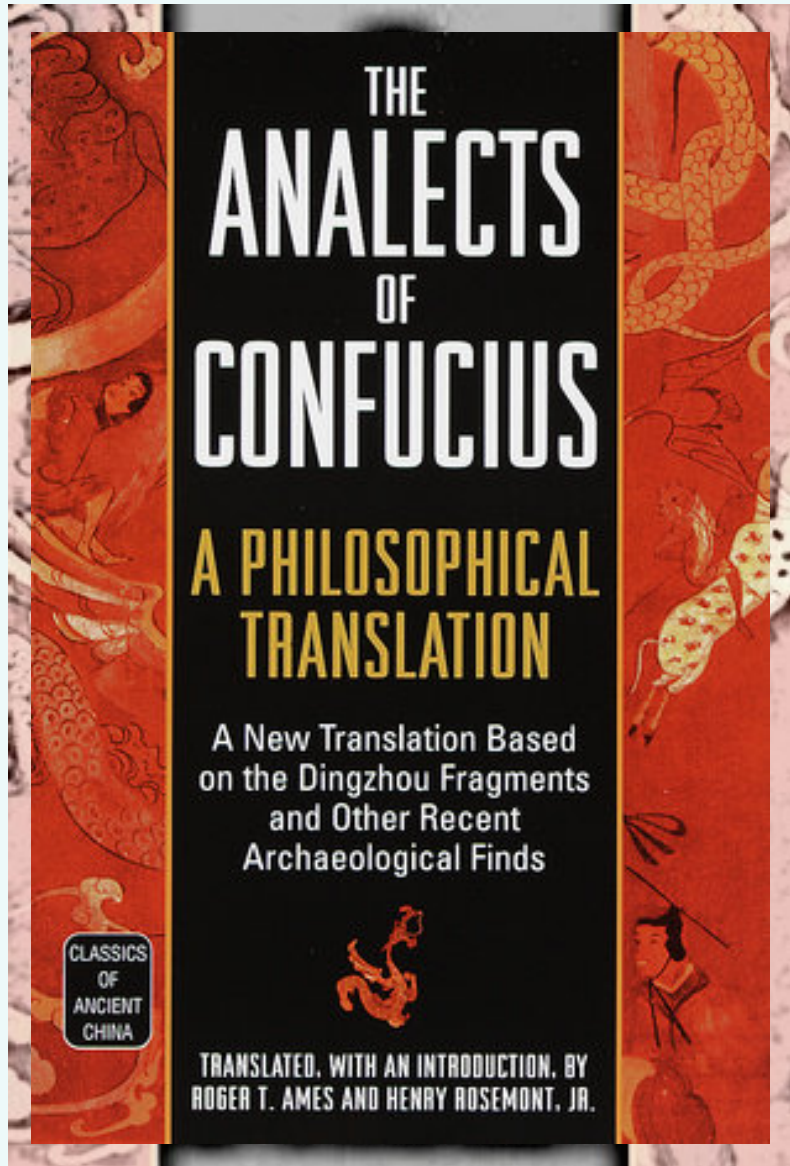
# The Golden Rule

“ Do not do unto others  
what you don't want  
others to do unto you. ”

Confucius

# Confucianism

- **Developed in China by Master Kong in 551-479 BC**
- **Believed that it is a route to a civil society**
- **Not a religion but a worldview or a way of life**
- **Confucius sought to educate, teach, and become an advisor to the King**
- **Focused on the importance of daily life and human interactions**
- **Foundation of Confucianism is an appreciation for one's character and the wellbeing of others**



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Retrieved from: [www.mitchellteachers.org](http://www.mitchellteachers.org)

- **Analects - record of his conversations and teachings by his followers**

# Social Rituals: 5 Key Relationships

Superior	Subordinate
Ruler	Ruled/Subjects
Father	Son
Husband	Wife
Older Brother	Younger Brother
Friend	Friend

**Filial Piety:** The family is the most important of relationships. The husband should be kind and should listen to his wife. The wife should also obey him because that is part of her assigned role.



# HUMANE BEHAVIOR

- Every person and living thing deserves respect, kindness, and care
- To have a peaceful and stable society, we must treat each other with gentleness and sincerity
- A ruler of the state should rule as a father would toward his son
- Help people in need to the best of your ability
- Honor your elders
- Be gentle and thoughtful

## Other Teachings

# INNER CULTIVATION

- Seeking broad education, considering one's actions and polishing one's character
- We can constantly develop and learn new virtues
- Life is a journey toward inner perfection



“ At 15, I set my heart on learning; at 30, I firmly took my stand; at 40, I had no delusions; at 50, I knew the mandate of Heaven; at 60, my ear was attuned; at 70, I followed my heart's desire without overstepping the boundaries of right. ”

Confucius





# Confucius' Aim of Education

To practice benevolence: ultimate goal of education

If the gentleman forsakes benevolence, in what way can he make a name for himself? The gentleman never deserts benevolence, not even for as long as it takes to eat a meal. If he hurries and stumbles, one may be sure that it is in benevolence.

The Analects, Bk. 4



# Confucius' Aim of Education

- Not to defer even to their teacher when it comes to the practice of benevolence (Bk.15)
- Not to impose on others what oneself does not desire (Bk.12)
- Establish and promote others as one desires to establish and promote oneself (Bk.6)

The cultivation of the way is to be done through humanity...and that the cultivation of the way is called **education**, where the **cultivation of the way is education itself.**

# Confucius' Educational Method

1. Teach by personal example.

Zigong asked what constitutes a leader.  
Confucius said: "A man who practices what he preaches."

The Analects, Book 2

# Confucius' Educational Method

If a superior is upright, then there will be obedience without orders being given; otherwise, there will not be obedience even though orders are given.

The Analects, Book 13

# Confucius' Educational Method

## 2. Universal education for all

- **Prior to 700 BC, education was controlled by high officials, exclusive to children of the noble families**
- **Commoners did not have a chance to go to school**
- **Confucius provided education for people of all ranks and taught indiscriminately**

# Confucius' Educational Method

## 3. Teaches according to students' ability

To fail to speak to a man who is capable of benefitting is to let a man go to waste. To speak to a man who is incapable of benefiting is to let one's words go to waste.

The Analects, Book 15

# Confucius' Educational Method

## 3. Teaches according to students' ability

You can tell those who are above average about the best, but not those who are below average.

The Analects, Book 6

# Confucius' Educational Method

## 4. Adopts the approach of self-enlightenment.

I do not enlighten those who are not eager to learn, nor those who are not anxious to give an explanation themselves. If I were presented one corner of the square and they cannot come back with the other three, I should not go over the points again.

The Analects, Book 7



# Centrality of Morality

The Master said: “In the presence of a good man, think all the time how you will learn from him. In the presence of a bad man, turn your gaze within.”

The Analects, Book 4 : 7

# Centrality of Morality

Grounded on basic human relationships

Ruler  
and  
Subject

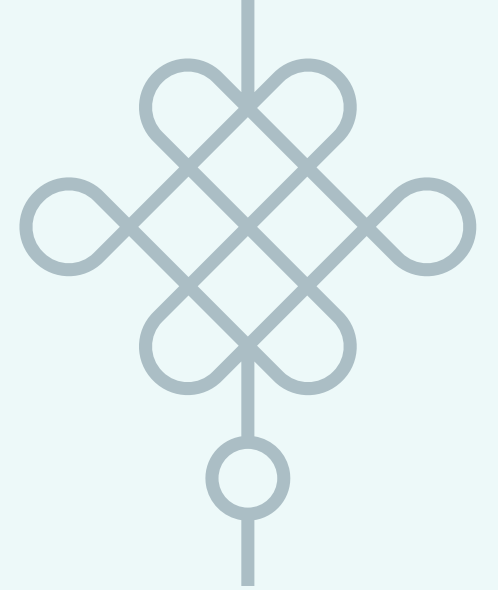
Father  
and  
Son

Husband  
and  
Wife

# Centrality of Morality

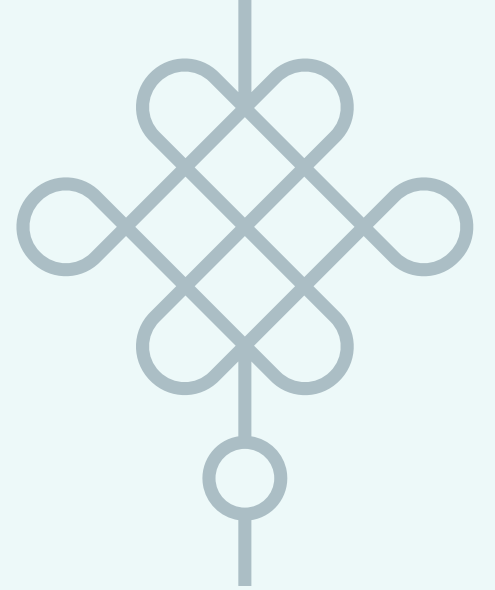
- **Education: see as key to ideal social order: creation of individuals to ensure better government (practical)**
- **but less interested in “manual” disciplines like agriculture though inventions were way ahead of European counterparts**

- **Focus: social adaptation and deep seated sense of politeness (obedience, self-restraint)**
- **Goal of formal education: preparation of life for imperial civil service examination**
- **Schooling was responsibility of parents (who paid tutors)**
- **Higher education for selected students: state funded**



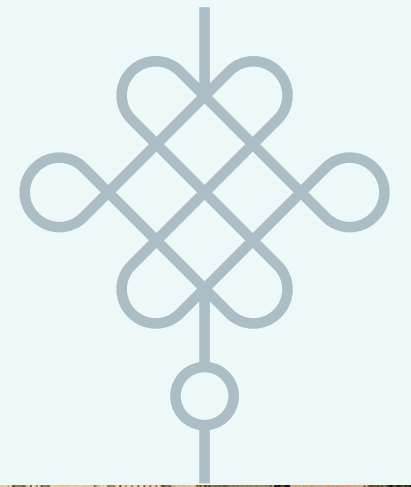
Traditional  
Chinese  
Educational  
Practice

- **Started in the womb with mothers having detailed advice on what to read, eat etc.**
- **3 years old: Chinese characters**
- **•7 years old: formal schooling: rote memorization**



**Han period (started in 206 BC) and used as screener**

- **Stage 1: District level: wear distinctive clothing and family will enjoy tax exemption**
- **Stage 2: Provincial level given every three years where one will answer for 9 straight days in a cell**
- **Stage 3: Metropolitan level (Major, then Palace examination)**



**Imperial  
Examination  
System**

**I strongly believe that Confucianism has affected Korean education severely. Korea is known for its obsession to education. Actually Korean high school students spend almost 10-12 hours studying a day. Their parents are willing to support everything for their children to branch out to the prestigious schools.**



**Francisco Cho**

former student in South Korea

**Back to Joseon Dynasty, the highest class was the scholar-gentry class, and to become part of this class, you had to pass the civil service exam. To pass the civil service exam means to be in powerful positions. This phenomenon has affected Koreans until now, so many people study really hard to get into powerful positions.**



**Francisco Cho**

former student in South Korea





# Points for Reflection

- Which part of Confucian educational system do you admire most? Why?
  - Do you see this happening in our country? Why? Why not?
  - If not, how do you want it done/practiced?
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