

CONFUCIUS' ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY

HZT4U1 - MR. WITTMANN - UNIT 2 - LECTURE 4



“TO SUBDUE ONE’S SELF AND RETURN TO PROPRIETY, IS PERFECT VIRTUE. . . .THE SUPERIOR MAN DOES NOT...ACT CONTRARY TO VIRTUE.”

(551-479 BC)

CONFUCIUS¹ BACKGROUND

- KINGDOM OF LU, 551-479 BC
- PHILOSOPHER, GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, EDUCATOR
- FOUND THE RU SCHOOL OF CHINESE THOUGHT
- DISMISSED DAOIST METAPHYSICAL IDEAS AND FOCUSED ON HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

CONFUCIUS^I BACKGROUND

(CONTINUED)

- HIS TEACHINGS, PRESERVED IN THE **ANALECTS**
- ANALECTS WERE COMPILED IN VARIOUS VERSIONS 200 YRS AFTER CONFUCIUS^I DEATH BY HIS STUDENTS
- DO NOT CAREFULLY SEPARATE FICTION FROM FACT
- HOW HUMANS INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER
- HOW HUMANS FORM AND PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

CONFUCIUS^I BACKGROUND

(CONTINUED)

- **MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND JUSTICE
(EXILED 16 YEARS)**
- **UPON HIS RETURN HE SPENT THE REMAINDER OF
HIS LIFE TEACHING, AND EDITED CHINESE
CLASSICS.**
- **BY 200 BC, SCHOLARS MENCIUS AND XUNZI
NAMED CONFUCIUS GREATEST TEACHER IN
CHINESE**
- **FOUNDATION OF LATER CHINESE EDUCATION**

CONFUCIUS¹ BACKGROUND

(CONTINUED)

- **CONFUCIUS PRESENTED HIS TEACHINGS AS LESSONS FROM ANTIQUITY, CLAIMING TO BE “A TRANSMITTER AND NOT A MAKER”**
- **MUCH OF HIS TEACHINGS SEEMED TO BE ORIGINAL AND REPRESENTED A RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM THE IDEAS AND PRACTICES OF HIS DAY**



CONFUCIUS' SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

- PEOPLE MUST LIVE WITHIN PARAMETERS ESTABLISHED BY HEAVEN, MAN AND NATURE
- EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS
- PRACTICING REN (COMPASSION) FOR OTHERS INVOLVED MODESTY, AVOID ARTFUL SPEECH, SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT
- GOLDEN RULE: “WHAT YOU DO NOT WISH FOR YOURSELF, DO NOT DO TO OTHERS;” “IF YOU DESIRE SUCCESS, HELP OTHERS ACHIEVE IT”

CONFUCIUS¹ SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

(CONTINUED)

- **DEVOTION TO FAMILY IS THE MOST BASIC FORM OF PROMOTING THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS AND ACHIEVED BY SELF-DISCIPLINE**
- **MASTER LI (SOCIETAL RITUAL FORMS AND RULES OF PROPRIETY), RESPECT SUPERIORS, PLAY YOUR SOCIETAL ROLE PROPERLY, THUS EARN RESPECT**
- **DO NOT PRACTICE RITUAL BLINDLY, BUT WITH SENSE OF THE WELL-BEING FOR OTHERS, PRACTICE WITH DEVOTION AND SINCERITY**

CONFUCIUS¹ SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

(CONTINUED)

- **FOLLOWING RITUAL HELPS ONE TO LEARN HOW TO RECONCILE INDIVIDUAL DESIRES WITH THE NEEDS OF THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY**
- **DON'T DENY DESIRE, BY EXPERIENCING DESIRES, WE LEARN THE VALUE OF SOCIAL STRUCTURES.**
- **THESE STRUCTURES ALLOW FOR THE SATISFACTION OF INDIVIDUAL DESIRES WHILE MINIMIZING CONFLICT THUS MAINTAINING SOCIETY.**

CONFUCIUS' POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

- THOSE IN POWER SHOULD NOT OPPRESS OR TAKE FOR GRANTED THEIR SUBJECTS
- RULER SHOULD LEARN SELF-DISCIPLINE AND GOVERN HIS SUBJECTS BY HIS OWN EXAMPLE
- LEAD PEOPLE BY VIRTUE NOT LAW (LEGALISM), AND THEY WILL POSSESS A SENSE OF SHAME AND COME TO YOU OF THEIR OWN ACCORD

CONFUCIUS' POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

(CONTINUED)

- **THEORY OF ZHENGMIN, LACK OF CONNECTION BETWEEN NAMES/LABELS/TITLES AND THEIR DEFINITIONS.**
- **ONE CLAIMING A POSITION OF POWER SHOULD LIVE TO VIRTUE OF THAT TITLE**
- **IF THE RULER'S BEHAVIOUR IS RECTIFIED THEN THE PEOPLE BENEATH HIM WILL FOLLOW SUIT**
- **MORAL POWER TRUMPS PHYSICAL FORCE**

CONFUCIUS & EDUCATION

- REAL UNDERSTANDING OF A SUBJECT COMES FROM LONG AND CAREFUL STUDY, NOT NATURAL UNDERSTANDING OR INTUITION
- FIND A GOOD TEACHER, IS SOMEONE OLDER WHO IS FAMILIAR WITH THE WAYS OF THE PAST, AND IMITATE HIS WORDS AND DEEDS



CONFUCIUS & EDUCATION

(CONTINUED)

- **CLAIMED IN HIS TIME VALUES WERE OUT OF JOINT ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR NO LONGER CORRESPOND TO THE LABELS ORIGINALLY ATTACHED TO THEM**
- **CREATE GENTLEMEN WHO CARRY THEMSELVES WITH GRACE, SPEAK CORRECTLY, AND DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY IN ALL THINGS**
- **TAUGHT PROPER SPEECH, GOVERNMENT AND 6 ARTS (RITUAL, MUSIC, ARCHERY, CHARIOT-RIDING, CALLIGRAPHY, AND COMPUTATION)**

CONFUCIUS & EDUCATION

(CONTINUED)

- **BOOK OF SONGS (DIDACTIC POEMS)**

- **CULTIVATES MORAL QUALITIES IN...**
 - **SELF**

 - **FAMILY**

 - **SOCIETY**

- **RESTORE PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY, MEANING TO LANGUAGE AND VALUES TO SOCIETY**

THE END
