The Leading Thinkers from the "one hundred schools" of the late zhou dynasty

* Questions of the times

1. why is the world so chaotic?
2. how does one find stability for the individual? for society?
3. what is the "good life"?(no one asked for the "meaning" of life.)

* Confucius(551-479 BCE)

1. Ren:"humanness" benevolence
2. the natural order of things is a moral order.
3. Li: ritual that reveals the natural order

* Confucius's Answer

1. Confucius's main principle was moral goodness and its power to transform society.

(potential for perfectibility in human nature.)

(opposed to profit)

1. prescription for the family

(filial piety)

1. prescription for society

(The proper observance of ritual)

* What Confucius didn't offer

1. no mysticism: feelings toward spirit world are ambivalent.
2. no hell
3. no explanation of the big "life" questions

* Mencius (372-289BCE)

1. Yi: "ritual" propriety in personal behavior
2. right relationships: father-son, subject-ruler, husband-wife, elder brother-younger brother, and friend-friend
3. Humankind is born good
4. people have the right to overthrow cruel leaders

* Mozi (479-381)

1. born between confucius's death and mencius's birth
2. successful in the promotion of his philosophical system in his own lifetime

* Mohists' Perceived Problems in Zhou Society

1. Critical of confucians as pretentious aristocrats, opposed confuscian skeptics regarding the spirit world, tendency toward fatalism, and preoccupation with ritual.
2. Opposed all forms of offensive warfare.

* Main Principle of Mohism

1. universal love (Boai) vs "Graded love"
2. unity of thought and action
3. obey rulers for the common good

* Laozi (c. 500 BCE)

1. The Way(Dao)

(道可道非常道)

("the way that way be spoken of is not the way")

1. Wu Wei 无为："effortlessness" as a political strategy.