
UNIT 1 CONFUCIANISM

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

Confucianism is a Chinese ethical and philosophical system developed from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BC). It focuses on human morality and right action. And it is a complex system of moral, social, political, philosophical, and quasi-religious thought that has had tremendous influence on the culture and history of East Asia. It might be considered a state religion of some East Asian countries, because of governmental promotion of Confucian values. By the end of this Unit you are expected to understand:

- the life of Confucius;
- sacred texts of Confucianism;
- Confucian worldview;
- cult of Confucius;
- sacrificial rites and feasts;
- ethical teachings;
- social philosophy;
- political philosophy; and
- views on education.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Confucianism along with the other two formal traditions, Taoism and Buddhism, has been one of the most influential systems of thought in China for centuries and remains an important aspect of Chinese civilization. Each of the three encompassed both a religion and a philosophy, centered on the worship of ancestors, personal and local deities. The central purpose of Chinese religion in general is to uphold the sacredness by maintaining harmony among human beings and between humanity and nature. The focus of Confucius in particular was on creating harmony in human society. His philosophy emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity. Confucius’ thoughts have been developed into a system of philosophy known as *Confucianism*. The teachings and philosophy of Confucius have deeply influenced Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese and Vietnamese thought and life. Several names for Confucianism exist in Chinese:

- School of the scholars
- Teaching of the scholars
- Study of the scholars
- Teaching of Confucius

1.2 LIFE OF CONFUCIUS

Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC) was a Chinese thinker and social philosopher. According to tradition, Confucius was born in 551 BC, in or near the city of Qufu, in the Chinese State of Lu (now part of Shantung Province). Confucius is a Latinized name. His Chinese name was Kung Fut-tzu, meaning Master Kong. He was a contemporary of Gautama Buddha and lived just before the time of Socrates and Plato.

Confucius came from an aristocratic but impoverished family. His father died when Confucius was three years old, and he was brought up in poverty by his mother. Confucius married a young girl named Qi Quan at 19 she gave birth to their first child Kong Li when he was 20. Confucius is reported to have worked as a shepherd, cowherd, clerk and book-keeper. At twenty-two he became a teacher. His mother died when Confucius was 23.

Soon became a renowned teacher. Many came to study under him. Moral education was the backbone of his educational programme. He also taught his disciples how to serve as officials on all levels in government.

Confucius lived during the Chou Dynasty (1100 B.C. to 256 B.C.). At this time, the land was divided among feudal lords. The moral and social order was in a state of decay. Confucius sought a way to restore the cultural-political order. He believed that reform would come through educating the leaders in the classics and in his philosophy. He therefore sought a political position of influence, from which he could implement his principles.

Confucius is said to have risen to the position of Chief magistrate in Lu and later Minister of Justice when he was fifty years of age. According to the Historians, the neighboring state of *Qi* was worried that Lu was becoming too powerful. *Qi* decided to sabotage Lu’s reforms by sending 100 good horses and 80 beautiful dancing girls to the Duke of Lu. The Duke indulged himself in pleasure and did not attend to official

duties for three days. Confucius was deeply disappointed at the misbehavior and immoral life of the Duke of Lu. He resigned in protest the post as minister of justice and left the state of Lu. According to tradition, after Confucius's resignation, he began a long journey (or set of journeys) around the small kingdoms of northeast and central China. He wandered for thirteen years from state to state, only to be disappointed and saddened everywhere by a refusal to respond to his moral challenge. The *Analects* pictures him spending his last years teaching disciples and transmitting the old wisdom. Burdened by the loss of both his son and his favorite disciples he died at the age of 72 or 73.

1.3 SACRED TEXTS

The Confucian canon is almost exclusively attributed to human beings. It includes the work of founding figures such as Confucius and Mencius, and covers subjects ranging from origin of civilization and good government to the history and protocol of early dynasties. At heart of Confucian tradition are its scriptures especially the "Five Classics" and the "Four Books".

1) The Five Classics

- a) **The Classics of Changes (I Ching):** is a collection of texts on divination based on a set of sixty-four hexagrams that reflect the relationship between Yin and Yang in nature and society
- b) **The Classics of documents (Shu Jing):** is a record of historical event, some traditionally dated to China's remote past providing lessons in moral behavior and good government.
- c) **The Classic of Poetry (Shi Ching):** is a collection of 305 poems and songs from early Chou Dynasty (1027-402 BC)
- d) **The Record of Rites (Li Ching):** consists of three books on the *Li* (Rites of Propriety), which is the basis of Confucian self-cultivation
- e) **The Spring and Autumn Annals (Ch'un Ching):** extracts from the history of the state of Lu 722-484, said to be compiled by Confucius.

2) The Four Books

- a) **The Analects (Lun Yü):** which formed part of the canon from the Han dynasty onward, is a record of Confucius' own prescriptions for an ideal society.
- b) **Mencius (Meng Tzu):** is the work of Confucius' eponymous follower, expands the Confucius' teaching in the Analects.
- c) **The Great Learning (Hsueh):** teaches that the first step in bringing the world into harmony is the cultivation of the individual.
- d) **The Doctrine of the Mean (Chung Yung):** asserts that cosmos and humanity form a unity through sincere effort.

1.4 CONFUCIAN WORLDVIEW

Confucius believed, however, in the Great Ultimate (Tao), which manifests itself in the I, or change. Tao is the cause of I, and generates Yang (energy) and Yin (a passive form). Together, Yin and Yang are seen as complementary symbols of the energy and tension in a system of counter forces. Tao, or the Great Ultimate, is the first-cause of the universe, a force that flows through all life, but is not a personal being. Confucians believe that Tai Chi is the Ultimate, an integrated energy of Yin and Yang, which is evolved from Wu Chi (Void energy) and can be transformed into various forms. The ultimate source of all energy and knowledge is called Tao, which is a continuum without boundaries in time and space, infinite, formless, and luminous (I – Ching).

In Confucianism, the system of Yin and Yang was conceived as a way of explaining the universe. It is purely relative system; any one thing is either Yin or Yang in relation to some other object or phenomena, and all things can be described only in relation to each other. The Yin and Yang are the negative and positive principles of universal force. The Yin and Yang together constitute the Tao, the eternal principle of heaven and earth, the origin of all things human and divine. The Tao produced the Chi (Qi, energy or life force). Because of Tao change is possible. Change is a transforming process due to the dynamics of Yin and Yang. Change has the notion of constancy – the change itself is unchanging.

Check Your Progress I

- Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) How does Confucius explain the universe?

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1.5 THE CULT OF CONFUCIUS, TEMPLE AND WORSHIP

Confucianism has had the most enduring and profound effect over Chinese culture. As time went on, Confucius became respected as a sage, and the temples to Confucius were built as a landmark for all of China. Among them, the Temple in Qufu, the hometown of Confucius, is the most famous and the largest. It was established in 478 BC, one year after Confucius’s death, at the order of the Duke Ai of the State of Lu, who commanded that the Confucian residence should be used to worship and offer sacrifice to Confucius. The temple was expanded repeatedly over a period of more than 2,000 years until it became the huge complex currently standing.

The development of state temples devoted to the cult of Confucius was an outcome of his gradual canonisation. In 195 BC, Han Gao Zu, founder of the Han Dynasty (r. 206–195 BCE), offered a sacrifice to the spirit of Confucius at his tomb in Qufu. Sacrifices to the spirit of Confucius and that of Yan Hui, his most prominent disciple, began in the Imperial University (Biyong) as early as 241.

The state cult of Confucius centered upon offering sacrifices to Confucius’s spirit in the Confucian temple. In addition to worshipping Confucius, Confucian temples also honored the “Four Correlates”, the “Twelve Philosophers”, and other disciples and Confucian scholars through history. The composition and number of figures worshipped changed and grew through time.

1.6 SACRIFICIAL RITES AND FEASTS

Confucianism is a man-centered religion. It focuses on rites more than prayer or divination. Of the rituals of Confucianism, the sacrificial ritual is the most fundamental because all the others are based on it. The Confucians devote sacrificial rites to those divine beings that have a beneficial relationship with human life. These divine being includes above all Heaven and Earth. The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars are also included for they give light; the wind, clouds, lightning, mountains, rivers and the sea for they support in the production food and other commodities; parents and ancestors for they bore and reared the current generation of humans; and sages and kings for they designed the model for the spiritual life of human. Communion feast is normally the integral part of the sacrificial rites that are devoted to those divine beings.

1.7 NATURE OF HUMAN

The Confucian philosophy is built on the foundational belief that human is basically good. The *Analects* state, “The Master said, ‘Is goodness indeed so far away? If we really wanted goodness, we should find that it was at our side.’” Confucian disciple Mencius further develops this, stating, “Man’s nature is naturally good just as water naturally flows downward.” This innate goodness could be developed and actualized through education, self-reflection, and discipline. Study in the six arts, which include ceremony, music, archery, charioteering, writing, and mathematics would develop one’s character.

However, despite human’s natural goodness, Confucius faced reality honestly. He questioned if it was possible to ever truly attain the level of the true gentleman. Confucius stated, “I for my part have never yet seen one who really cared for goodness, nor one who really abhorred wickedness.” He said of himself, “As to being a divine sage or even a good man, far be it from me to make any such claim.” “The Master said, ‘The Ways of the true gentleman are three. I myself have met with success in none of them.’” However, if man by nature is good, why can we not attain what should be natural to us?

1.8 ETHICS

Three key principles are emphasized in Confucius’ teachings: the principles of *Li*, *Yi* and *Ren*,

Li.

The term *Li* has several meanings, often translated as propriety, reverence, courtesy, ritual or the ideal standard of conduct. It is what Confucius believed to be the ideal standard of religious, moral, and social conduct. *Li* is based on three important conceptual aspects of life: ceremonies associated with sacrifice to ancestors and deities of various types, social and political institutions, and the etiquette of daily behavior.

Other Religions

According to Confucius, *Li* is defined as proprietary rites or good manners. The concept of *Li* determines how you act in a given relationship. In other words, *Li* can be viewed as a person's morality. A person's morality is responsible how they act or react to certain situations as well as how they view the world. Confucius advocates the necessity of *Li* as a stepping stone to social harmony.

Li is interpreted quite differently throughout Confucian philosophy. The founder of Confucian philosophy believes that before *Li* can be achieved, a person must have a sense of sincerity and be true to oneself (Cheng). This belief that virtue is the backbone of morality spreads even further, all the way to the social scope. Confucius' teachings reveal that a simple, secular, and unsassuming attitude toward life is the root of morality. Starting from being sincere to oneself (cheng). *Li*: The Confucian theory of ethics as exemplified in *li* was believed by some that *li* originated from the heavens. Confucius's view was more nuanced. His approach stressed the development of *li* through the actions of sage leaders in human history, with less emphasis on its connection with heaven. His discussions of *li* seem to redefine the term to refer to all actions committed by a person to build the ideal society, rather than those simply conforming with canonical standards of ceremony. In the early Confucian tradition, *li*, though still linked to traditional forms of action, came to point towards the balance between maintaining these norms so as to perpetuate an ethical social fabric, and violating them in order to accomplish ethical good. These concepts are about doing the proper thing at the proper time, and are connected to the belief that training in the *li* that past sages have devised cultivates in people virtues that include ethical judgment about when *li* must be adapted in light of situational contexts.

Yì

In early Confucianism, *yì* and *li* are closely linked terms. *Yì* can be translated as righteousness, though it may simply mean what is ethically best to do in a certain context. The term contrasts with action done out of self-interest. While pursuing one's own self-interest is not necessarily bad, one would be a better, more righteous person if one based one's life upon following a path designed to enhance the greater good, an outcome of *yì*. This is doing the right thing for the right reason. More often this term is used in opposition to personal advantages or profit. It means the right principle of behavior, in contrast to egoism. It is something like a principle of justice or what action one should follow or conform to. *Yì* is based upon reciprocity.

Rén

Just as action according to *Li* should be adapted to conform to the aspiration of adhering to *yì*, so *yì* is linked to the core value of *rén*. *Rén* is the virtue of perfectly fulfilling one's responsibilities toward others, most often translated as "benevolence" or "humaneness" or "goodness" and other translations that have been put forth include "authoritativeness" and "selflessness." Confucius's moral system was based upon empathy and understanding others, rather than divinely ordained rules. To develop one's spontaneous responses of *rén* so that these could guide action intuitively was even better than living by the rules of *yì*. To cultivate one's attentiveness to *rén* one used another Confucian version of the Golden Rule: one must always treat others just as one would want others to treat oneself. Virtue, in this Confucian view, is based upon harmony with other people, produced through this type of ethical practice by a growing identification of the interests of self and other.

In this regard, Confucius articulated an early version of the Golden Rule:

“What one does not wish for oneself, one ought not to do to anyone else; what one recognizes as desirable for oneself, one ought to be willing to grant to others.”

The word *rén* employed in the Book of Poetry to describe noble huntsmen. Of various utterances recorded in his Analects, two remarks characterizing *rén* are fundamental: “to love humanity” and “to return to Li.” Confucius sometimes views *rén* as a particular quality, along with cleverness, trustworthiness, forthrighteousness, courage and so on.

Rén as love is based on the feeling one has toward one’s own parents and brothers. “Filial Piety and brotherly love are the roots of *rén*. Filial love is crucial because Confucius believes that gratitude and affection towards one’s parents enables one willingly to accept parental authority and hierarchical relation between parent and child. *Rén* as love is the expansion of the roots of filial love. This expansion consists in the transferring of the family’s relation of hierarchy and fraternity to the larger society. As a good father makes a good ruler, a good son makes a good subject. A man of *rén* starts loving parents, and then gradually expands circle of love. Hence, the determination that *rén* is to love humanity serves to justify the inner basis of returning to li.

When Confucius claims that *rén* is to return to li, he is asking each agent to act in conformity with social values, and thereby become accepted and respected by the society or tradition he or she is in. To be a person of *rén* is first of all to be a social person, equipped with ethical virtues.

The principle of *rén* is closely associated with another important concept: *Chun-Tzu*, the idea of the true gentleman. It is the man who lives according to the highest ethical standards. The gentleman displays five virtues: self-respect, generosity, sincerity, persistence, and benevolence. His relationships are described as the following: as a son, he is always loyal; as a father, he is just and kind; as an official, he is loyal and faithful; as a husband, he is righteous and just; and as a friend, he is faithful and tactful.

The five Relationships

Confucianism speaks of five basic human relationships. The influence of the theory of the five elements gave the impression that there should be “five relationships,” “Wu lun”. Confucius believed that everyone had their role to play based on their relationship to others. If everyone fulfilled their duties and kept their place then society would be stable and harmonious. Confucius saw that five major human relationships should be governed by li, or propriety. Those relationships are:

- 1) Ruler and subject
- 2) Father and son
- 3) Husband and wife
- 4) Elder brother to younger brother
- 5) Friend to friend.

a) Reciprocity

Shu, or reciprocity, is seen in the five relationships as follows:

- 1) Benevolence in rulers, loyalty in ministers and subjects
- 2) Kindness in the father, filial piety in the son
- 3) Righteous behavior in the husband, obedience in the wife
- 4) Gentleness in the oldest son, humility and respect in the younger siblings
- 5) Humane consideration in each other.

In each of the relationships, the superior member (father, husband, etc.) has the duty of benevolence and care for the subordinate member (son, wife, etc.). The subordinate member has the duty of obedience. The only exception might be the relationship between friend and friend, which may actually involve equality — unless, of course, one is older than the other, which would turn it into a relationship like that between older and younger brother. Confucianism also speaks of The “Six Relationships” or “Six Relations,” “liù lún.” They are supposed to be the basis of all social connections between persons, and all six are based on the fundamental relationship between parents and children. Thus they are all variations of “filial piety” the religious respect that children owe to their parents. The reverential attitude toward the teacher is highly emphasized in this version of six relations. Confucius says: When a man has been your teacher for a single day, you should treat him as your father for the rest of his life.

The six relations are as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Superior	Father	Husband	Elder brother	Ruler	Friend	Teacher
Subordinate	Son	Wife	Younger brothers	Subject	Friend	Student

b) Filial Piety

For Confucius and his followers, the relationship between father and son was the most important. “filial piety” - it is the important virtue. Confucius also incorporated the notion of the four classes: the scholar, the peasants, the artisans (a.k.a. craftsmen), and the lowest of the low, the merchant. Notice two things, the place of the peasant and the absence of warriors. Confucianism had no need of war, because if everyone is following their proper role then there should be no war. If there is war, then Confucianism is out the window anyway. China never glorified the warrior as much as Japan and Europe did. Also, the class order put peasants second since they provided the food that everyone else needed to live. Artisans at least make useful things, but merchants were viewed as parasites whose only purpose was to live (and get rich) off the sweat of others’ labor.

Check Your Progress II

- Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.
- b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of the unit.

- 1) Whom did the people worship in the temples?
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2) How will the society be harmonious and stable.?

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1.9 CONFUCIUS’ SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Confucius’ social philosophy largely revolves around the concept of *ren*, “compassion” or “loving others.” Cultivating or practicing such concern for others involved deprecating oneself. This meant being sure to avoid artful speech or an ingratiating manner that would create a false impression and lead to self-aggrandizement. Those who have cultivated *ren* are, on the contrary, “simple in manner and slow of speech.” For Confucius, such concern for others is demonstrated through the practice of forms of the Golden Rule: “What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others;” “Since you yourself desire standing then help others achieve it, since you yourself desire success then help others attain it.” He regards devotion to parents and older siblings as the most basic form of promoting the interests of others before one’s own and teaches that such altruism can be accomplished only by those who have learned self-discipline.

Learning self-restraint involves studying and mastering *li*, the ritual forms and rules of propriety through which one expresses respect for superiors and enacts his role in society in such a way that he himself is worthy of respect and admiration. A concern for propriety should inform everything that one says and does:

Look at nothing in defiance of ritual, listen to nothing in defiance of ritual, speak of nothing in defiance of ritual, never stir hand or foot in defiance of ritual.

Subjecting oneself to ritual does not, however, mean suppressing one’s desires but instead learning how to reconcile one’s own desires with the needs of one’s family and community. Confucius and many of his followers teach that it is by experiencing desires that we learn the value of social structures that make an ordered society possible. Nor does Confucius’ emphasis on ritual mean that he was a punctilious ceremonialist who thought that the rites of worship and of social exchange had to be practiced correctly at all costs. Confucius taught, on the contrary, that if one did not possess a keen sense of the well-being and interests of others his ceremonial manners signified nothing. Equally important was Confucius’ insistence that the rites not be regarded as mere forms, but that they be practiced with complete devotion and sincerity. “He [i.e., Confucius] sacrificed to the dead as if they were present. He sacrificed to the spirits as if the spirits were present. The Master said, ‘I consider my not being present at the sacrifice as though there were no sacrifice.’”

While ritual forms often have to do with the more narrow relations of family and clan, *ren*, however, is to be practiced broadly and informs one’s interactions with all people. Confucius warns those in power that they should not oppress or take for granted even the lowliest of their subjects. “You may rob the Three Armies of their commander, but you cannot deprive the humblest peasant of his opinion.” Confucius regards loving others as a calling and a mission for which one should be ready to die.

1.10 CONFUCIUS’ POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Confucius’ political philosophy is also rooted in his belief that a ruler should learn self-discipline, should govern his subjects by his own example, and should treat them with love and concern. “If the people be led by laws, and uniformity among them be sought by punishments, they will try to escape punishment and have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue, and uniformity sought among them through the practice of ritual propriety, they will possess a sense of shame and come to you of their own accord.”

Most troubling to Confucius was his perception that the political institutions of his day had completely broken down. He attributed this collapse to the fact that those who wielded power as well as those who occupied subordinate positions did so by making claim to titles for which they were not worthy. In the words of Confucius “Good government consists in the ruler being a ruler, the minister being a minister, the father being a father, and the son being a son. If I claim for myself a title and attempt to participate in the various hierarchical relationships to which I would be entitled by virtue of that title, then I should live up to the meaning of the title that I claim for myself. The attitude and behavior of the ruler is very important for good government. In a conversation with Ji Kangzi (who had usurped power in Lu), Confucius advised: “If your desire is for good, the people will be good. The moral character of the ruler is the wind; the moral character of those beneath him is the grass. When the wind blows, the grass bends.”

For Confucius, what characterized superior governing was the possession of ‘virtue.’ Conceived of as a kind of moral power that allows one to win a following without recourse to physical force, such ‘virtue’ also enabled the ruler to maintain good order in his state without troubling himself and by relying on loyal and effective deputies. Confucius claimed that, “He who governs by means of his virtue is, to use an analogy, like the pole-star: it remains in its place while all the lesser stars do homage to it.” The way to maintain and cultivate such royal ‘virtue’ was through the practice and enactment of *li* or ‘rituals’—the ceremonies that defined and punctuated the lives of the ancient Chinese aristocracy.

1.11 CONFUCIUS AND EDUCATION

A hallmark of Confucius’ thought is his emphasis on education and study. He disparages those who have faith in natural understanding or intuition and argues that the only real understanding of a subject comes from long and careful study. Study, for Confucius, means finding a good teacher and imitating his words and deeds. A good teacher is someone older who is familiar with the ways of the past and the practices of the ancients. While he sometimes warns against excessive reflection and meditation, Confucius’ position appears to be a middle course between studying and reflecting on what one has learned. “He who learns but does not think is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.” Confucius, himself, is credited by the tradition with

having taught altogether three thousand students, though only seventy are said to have truly mastered the arts he cherished. Confucius is willing to teach anyone, whatever their social standing, as long as they are eager and tireless. He taught his students morality, proper speech, government, and the refined arts. While he also emphasizes the “Six Arts” — ritual, music, archery, chariot-riding, calligraphy, and computation — it is clear that he regards morality the most important subject. Confucius’ pedagogical methods are striking. He never discourses at length on a subject. Instead he poses questions, cites passages from the classics, or uses apt analogies, and waits for his students to arrive at the right answers. “I only instruct the eager and enlighten the fervent. If I hold up one corner and a student cannot come back to me with the other three, I do not go on with the lesson.”

Check Your Progress III

Note : a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answer with those provided at the end of the unit.

1) What is Rén?

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2) What is the basis of Political philosophy of Confucianism?

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1.12 LET US SUM UP

Although Confucianism may include ancestor worship, sacrifice to ancestral spirits and an abstract celestial deity, and the deification of ancient kings and even Confucius himself, all these features can be traced back to non-Confucian Chinese beliefs established long before Confucius. Generally speaking, Confucianism is not considered a religion by Chinese or other East Asian people. Part of this attitude may be explained by the stigma placed on many “religions” as being superstitious, illogical, or unable to deal with modernity. Many Buddhists state that Buddhism is not a religion, but a philosophy, and this is partially a reaction to negative popular views of religion. Similarly, Confucians maintain that Confucianism is not a religion, but rather a moral code or philosophic worldview. There is a much more blurred line between religion and philosophy in non-Western thought. Most of the Western distinction is in fact a relatively recent phenomenon, resulting from the Enlightenment period unique to Western Europe. Most scholarly, comprehensive definitions of religion account for this cultural difference.

Therefore, it could be said that while Confucianism is not a religion by Western standards (even according to Asian adherents), it is a religion in the East Asian sense of the word. If religion is by definition worship of supernatural entities, the answer must be that Confucianism is not a religion. If, on the other hand, a religion is defined as a belief system that includes moral stances, guides for daily life, systematic views of humanity and its place in the universe, etc., then Confucianism most definitely qualifies. As with many such important concepts, the definition of religion is quite contentious.

1.13 KEY WORDS

- Value** : In ethics, value is a property of objects, including physical objects as well as abstract objects (e.g. actions), representing their degree of importance.
- Virtue and Values** : Virtues can be placed into a broader context of values. Virtue is the core of underlying values or fundamental value that contributes to our system of beliefs, ideas and / or opinions.

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1.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) In Confucianism, the system of Yin and Yang was conceived as a way of explaining the universe. It is purely relative system; any one thing is either Yin or Yang in relation to some other object or phenomena, and all things can be described only in relation to each other. The Yin and Yang are the negative and positive principles

of universal force. The Yin and Yang together constitute the Tao, the eternal principle of heaven and earth, the origin of all things human and divine. The Tao produced the Chi (Qi, energy or life force). Because of Tao change is possible. Change is a transforming process due to the dynamics of Yin and Yang. Change has the notion of constancy – the change itself is unchanging.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) The state cult of Confucius centered upon offering sacrifices to Confucius's spirit in the Confucian temple. In addition to worshipping Confucius, Confucian temples also honored the "Four Correlates", the "Twelve Philosophers", and other disciples and Confucian scholars through history. The composition and number of figures worshipped changed and grew through time.
- 2) Confucianism speaks of five basic human relationships. The influence of the theory of the five elements gave the impression that there should be "five relationships," "Wu lun". Confucius believed that everyone had their role to play based on their relationship to others. If everyone fulfilled their duties and kept their place then society would be stable and harmonious. Confucius saw that five major human relationships should be governed by li, or propriety.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) Confucius' social philosophy largely revolves around the concept of *ren*, "compassion" or "loving others." Cultivating or practicing such concern for others involved deprecating oneself. This meant being sure to avoid artful speech or an ingratiating manner that would create a false impression and lead to self-aggrandizement. Those who have cultivated *ren* are, on the contrary, "simple in manner and slow of speech." For Confucius, such concern for others is demonstrated through the practice of forms of the Golden Rule: "What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others;" "Since you yourself desire standing then help others achieve it, since you yourself desire success then help others attain it." He regards devotion to parents and older siblings as the most basic form of promoting the interests of others before one's own and teaches that such altruism can be accomplished only by those who have learned self-discipline.
- 2) Confucius' political philosophy is also rooted in his belief that a ruler should learn self-discipline, should govern his subjects by his own example, and should treat them with love and concern. "If the people be led by laws, and uniformity among them be sought by punishments, they will try to escape punishment and have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue, and uniformity sought among them through the practice of ritual propriety, they will possess a sense of shame and come to you of their own accord."