



Confucian-Taoism

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The Mix

- Confucius (551-479 BC) teachings promoted civic stability and were focused on the present (material) world.
- Lao-Tze (6th to 5th century BC) teachings included what we would now consider “otherworldly” or “spiritual” concepts, such as yin (female, moon, earth) and yang (male, sun, heavens).
- Confucianism and Taoism have mixed over the millennia into a Confucian-Taoist worldview (metanarrative) which is widely followed in China and Taiwan.
- An estimated 55 million adherents but it heavily influences those who claim other religions (syncretism).

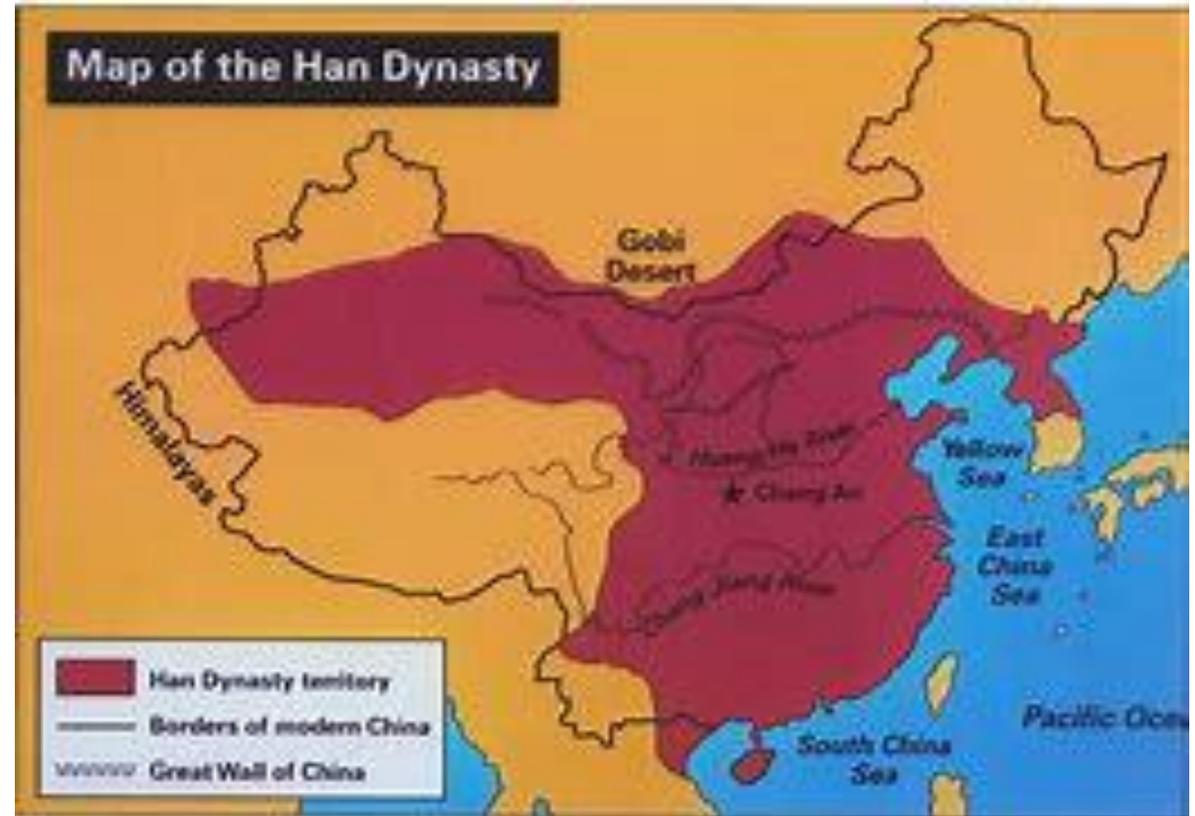
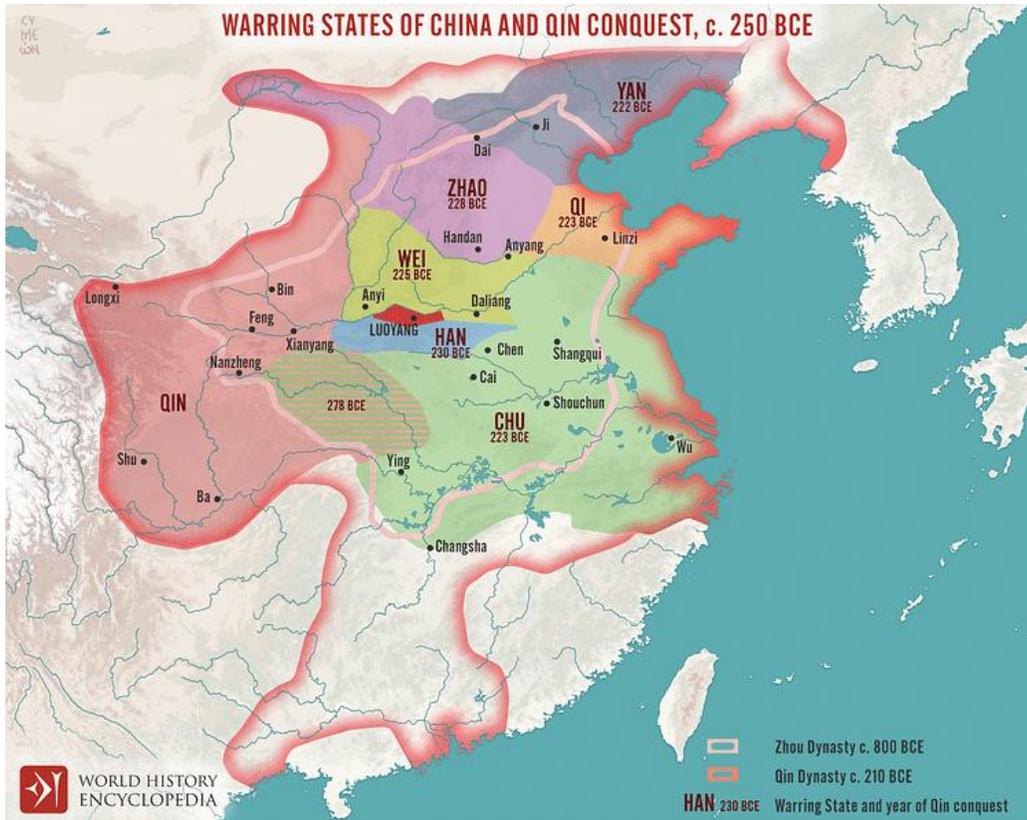
Confucius and Lao Zi



History

- Warring states period (453-222 BC) – political stability through non-action
- Han Dynasty (206 BC – AD 220) – Blending of Confucianism and Taoism.
- Middle Ages (AD 20-581) – Numinous Treasure school which incorporated Buddhist ideas into Confucian-Taoism
- Tang Dynasty (618-907) – Imperial support
- Song and Yuan Dynasties (960-1368) – Greater imperial support
- Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) – Height of imperial support
- Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) – Decline of imperial support led to decline of Confucian-Taoism.
- Modern era (1911-present) – Communist opposition

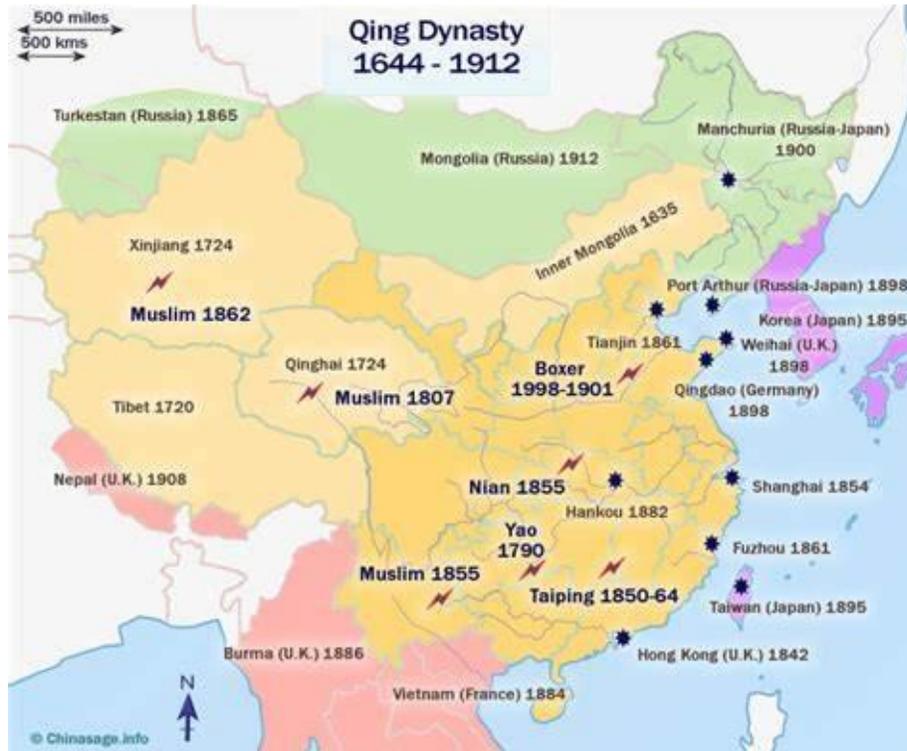
Warring States and Han Dynasty



Song and Tang Dynasties



Qing and Ming Dynasties



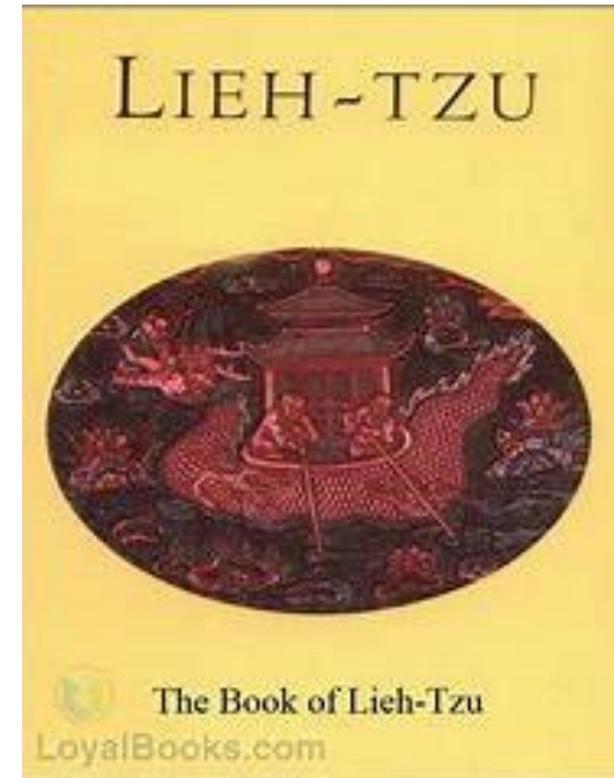
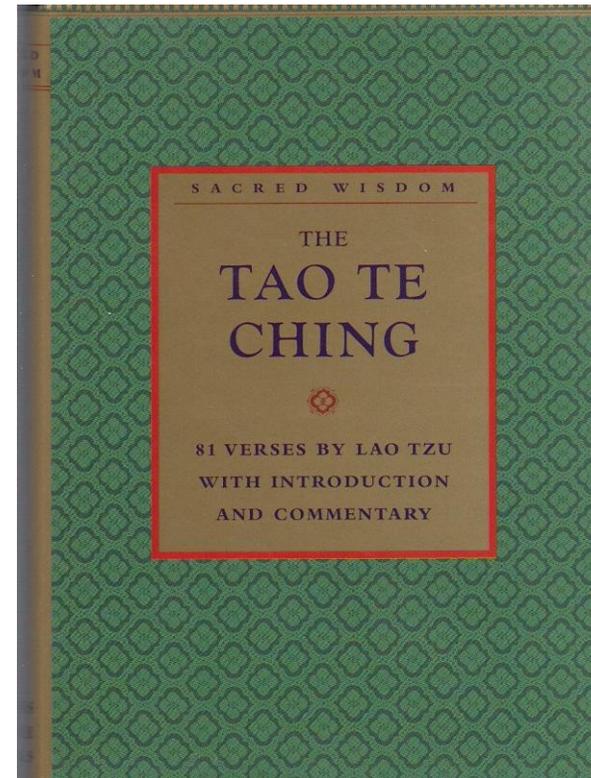
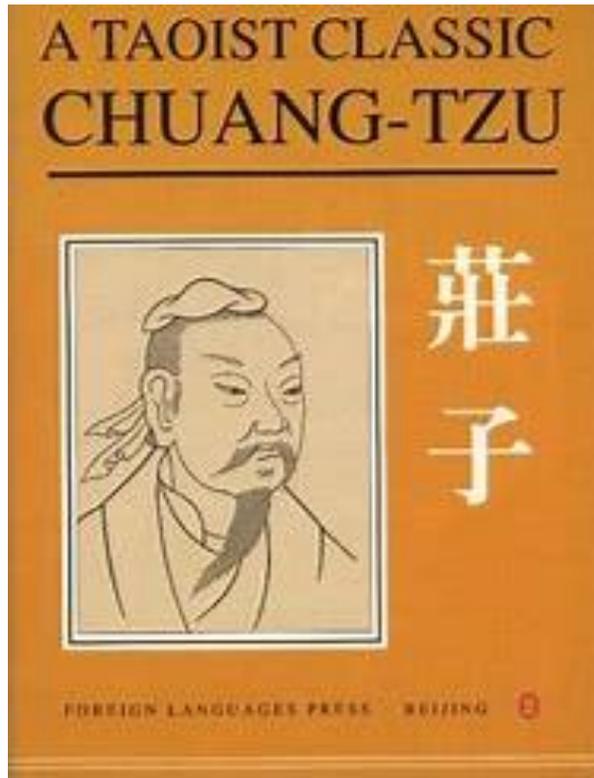
Taoism



Taoist Beliefs

- Taoism is mystical with few organized forms, while Confucianism is practical and prescriptive.
- There is no God, only gods. Heaven and hell contain many gods.
- Scriptures – Book of the Way (*Tao-te-ching*), Master Zuang (*Chuang-Tzu*), Book of Changes (*I-Ching*), and Scripture of Perfect Emptiness (*Lieh-tzu*).
- Man – humans are divine and have air (*chi*), which is also spiritual energy. Attaining moral virtue (humility, compassion, moderation) is the goal.
- Sin – not acting according to the Tao
- Salvation – “non-doing,” adapting to change, responding to the normal flow of events
- Afterlife – none, unknown, or heaven and hell.

Taoist Scriptures

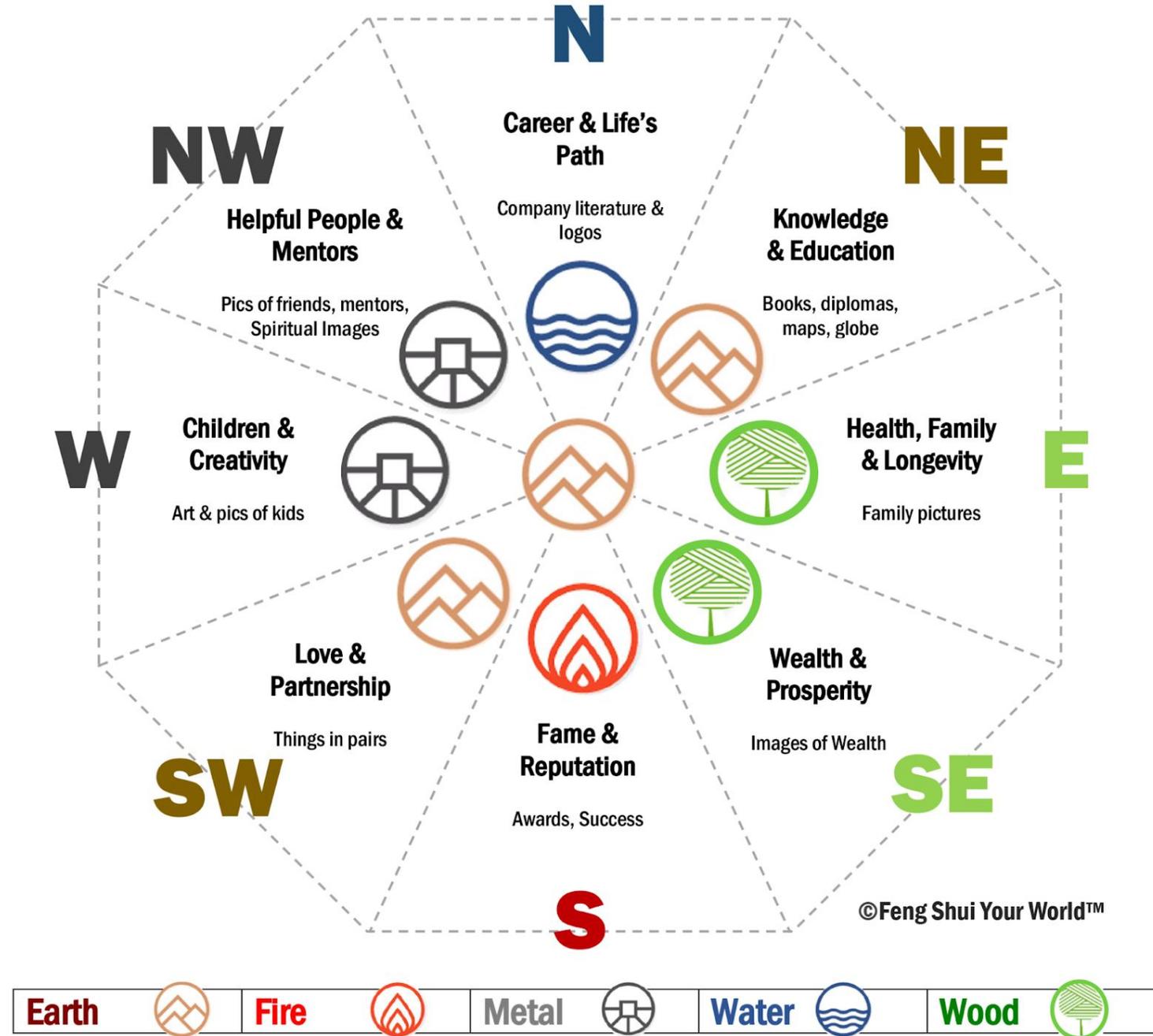


Distinctive Taoist Beliefs

- *Tai-chi* – ritual body movements to balance or unblock physical and spiritual energy (*chi*).
- *Chen-jen* – a Taoist master who has become deified and therefore immortal.
- Emptiness – the moral ideal
- *Pu* – perceiving the world with an untainted mind
- *Tai Hsi* (embryonic teaching) – become immortal by emulating breathing patterns of a child in the womb.
- *Feng shui* – finding and creating the best environment for life, based on one's birth year, the local environment, and movements of the planet and stars.

Office Feng Shui

- Taoism impacts the West



Religious Taoism

- Symbols, priests, ceremonies, temples, and a pantheon of gods.
 - The First Principle (*Yuan-shih Tien-tsun*) – eternal, changeless, infinite
 - Jade Emperor (Yu-huang) – metes out justice
 - Three Pure Ones (*San-ch'ing*) – represented Lao-Tzu.
 - Three officials (San-kuan) – keep track of each person's good and evil deeds
- Occult practices
 - Magical arts – controlling body functions, necromancy, levitation, numerology, alchemy (turning base metals into gold), divination, sorcery, astrology
 - Rites for handling exorcisms, fortune telling, ghosts, and paranormal healing
- Heavy syncretism with Buddhism

Jade Emperor

- Justice

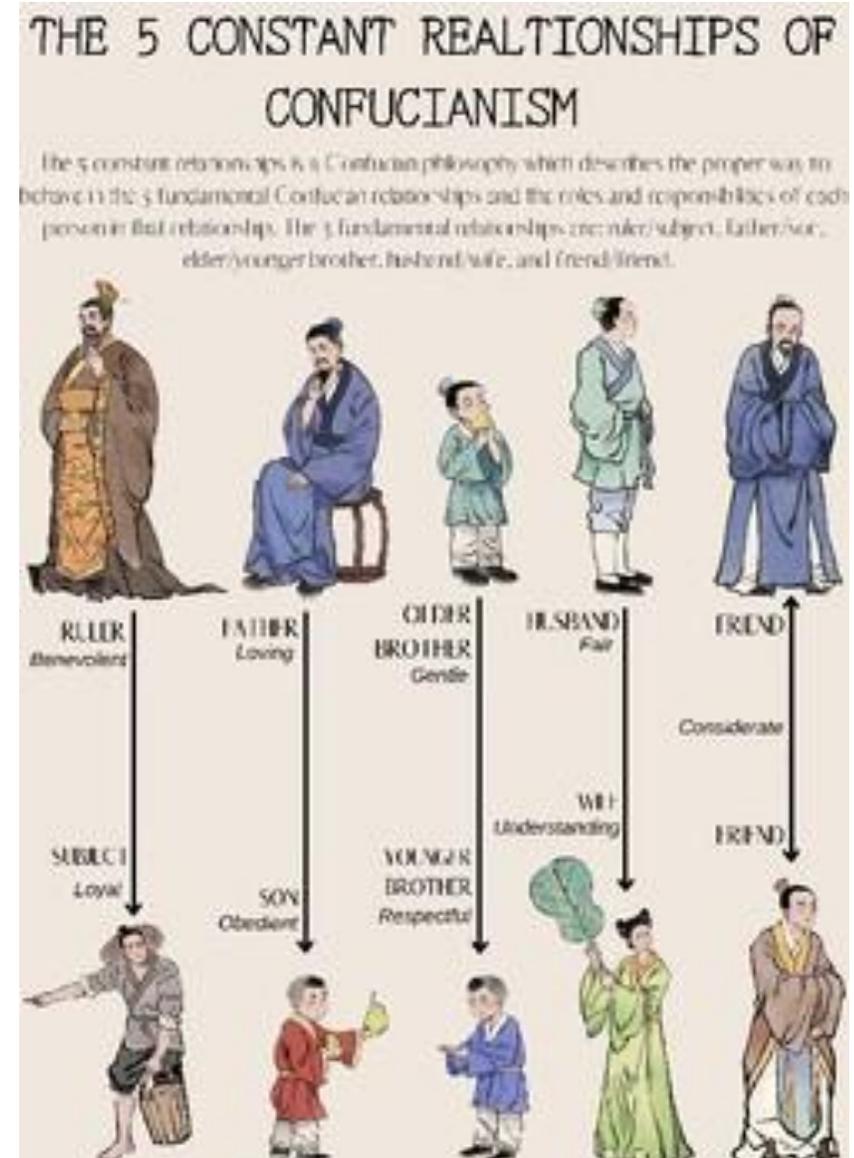


San-Kuan (3 officials) – record good and evil



Confucianism

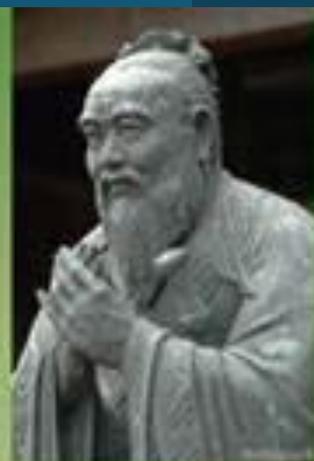
- Primarily focuses on social relationships



Confucian History

- Confucius (551-479 BC) was a teacher and minor civil servant who died without fame but had a few followers.
 - He wrote down very few of his teachings
 - He felt his life was a failure
- Early advocates – Mencius (372-289 BC), Hsun-tzu (310-237 BC), Tung Vhung-shu (179-104 BC)
- Declined after the fall of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220)
- Gained popularity under Tang (618-907), Song (960-1279), and Qing (1644-1911) emperors
- Suppressed by the Communist Chinese government (1949 to present)

Years of Confucius' Life



Kong qui (aka Confucius) was born on August 27, 551 BC in the Lu State of China.

Believed "ren" or "loving others" could be used in the practice of the golden rule "What you do not wish for yourselves, do not do to others"

His philosophy of education focused on the "Six Arts" archery, calligraphy, computation, music, chariot-driving and ritual.

Major Works include
-rearrangement of the Book of Odes

-revision of the Book of Documents

-compiled a historical account of the 12 dukes of Lu, called the *Spring and Autumn Annals*

-*Lunyu* which sets forth Confucius' philosophical and political beliefs, is thought to be compiled by his disciples and was later translated to English and titled *The Analects of Confucius*.

Confucius died on November 21, 479 B.C. in Qufu, China, a year after losing his son, Tzu-lu, in battle

Confucius' disciples made him famous



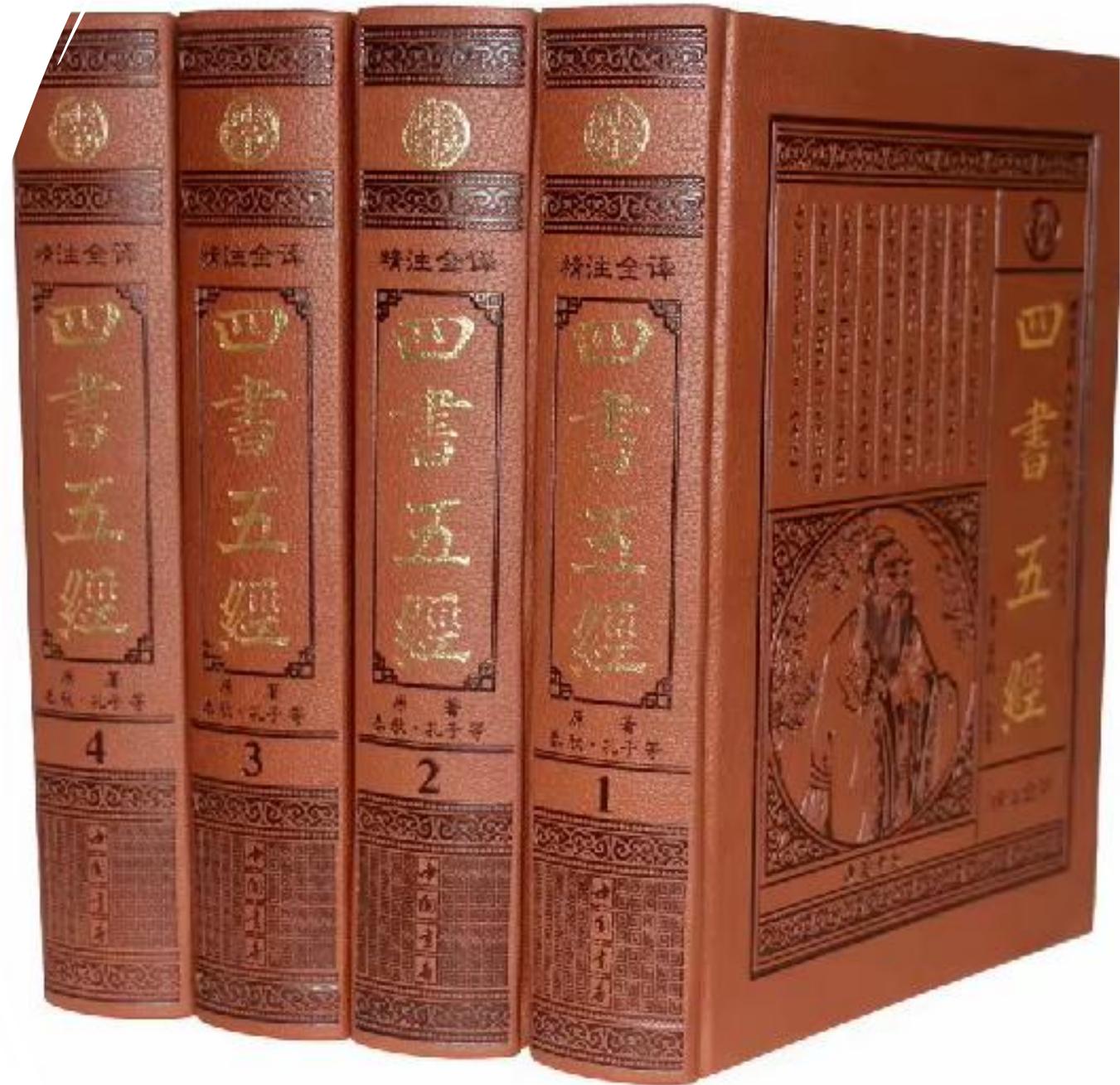
Confucianism

- Five main schools – neo-Confucianism, Singapore Confucianism, Japanese Confucianism, Korean Confucianism, and Han Confucianism
- Confucianism is an all-encompassing system of ethics that establishes and preserves the basic social structure, values, and rites of traditional Chinese culture.
- Fundamental ideas
 - Rectification of names – act according to your social position
 - Every social position has inherent responsibilities, which should be fulfilled because of one's love for others.
 - Ming – acting virtuously confers benefit to the doer and the recipient.

Confucian Beliefs (1)

- Creation is not addressed, but social order (marriage, family, government) reflects the order of the universe.
- No revealed scripture, but the Analects of Confucius (*Lun-yu*), Book of Mencius (*Meng-tzu*), Hsiao Ching, Doctrine of the Mean (*Chung-Yung*), Great Learning (*Ta-Hsueh*), Book of Odes (*Shih-ching*), and Book of History (*Shu-ching*) are influential.
- God – *Tien* (heaven) is a philosophical principle, while spirits (*shen*) and ghosts (*guei*) impact life.
- Man – people are defined by their relationships and maintaining proper relationships is their key activity.
 - Key - wife-husband, son-father, younger-older brother, subject-ruler. A lesser may never criticize a greater.
 - Humans are morally neutral but gain virtue with good works

Four Books of Confucianism

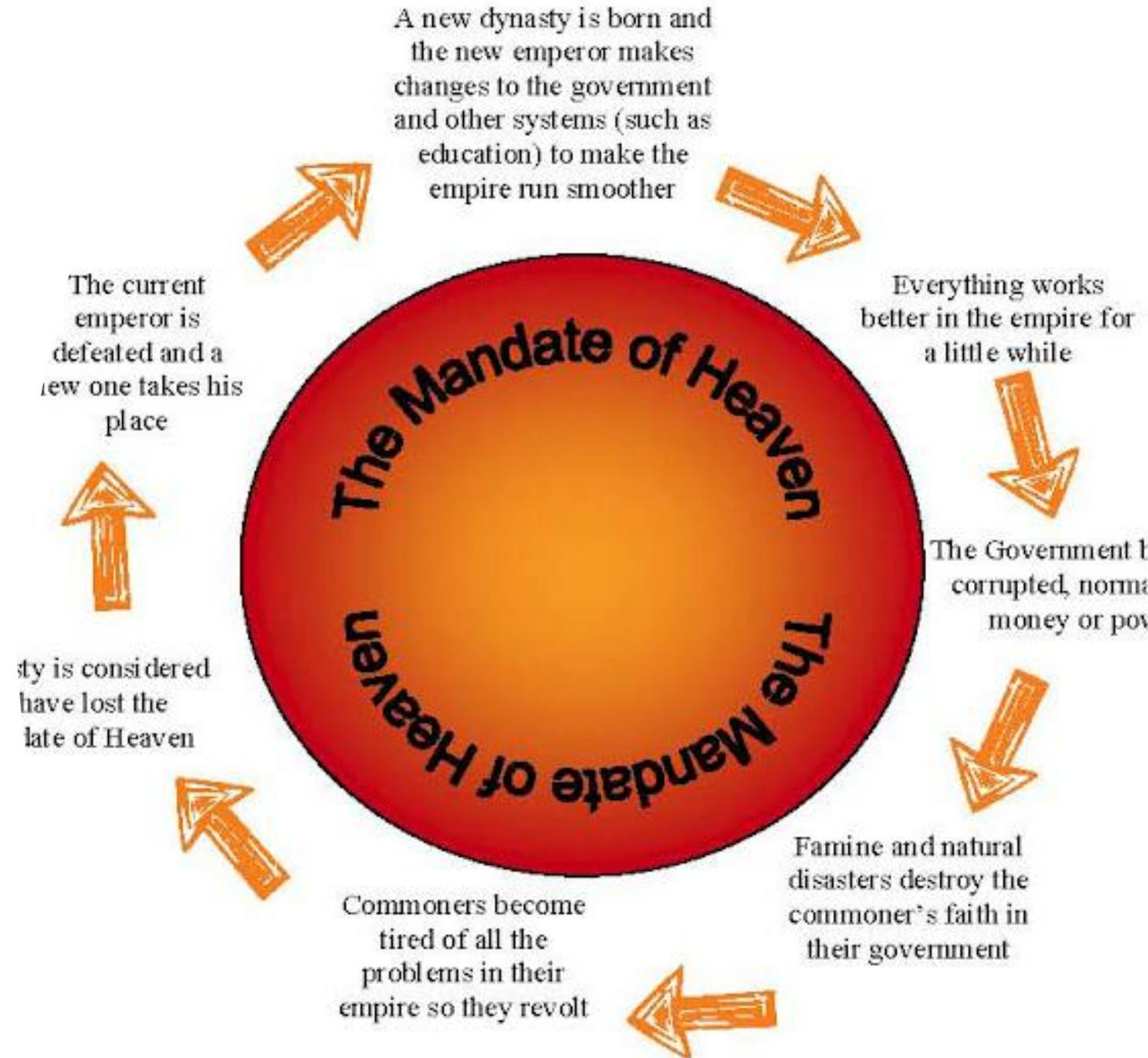


Confucian Beliefs (2)

- The Mandate of Heaven is the moral obligation placed on every person.
- The most important ethical principle is moral propriety (*li*). To reject *Li* is a grave offense.
- Present-world societal success is the reward. There is no need for salvation in the Western sense.
- After death, one becomes a departed ancestor who needs to be cared for by the living.
- Popular Confucianism holds that - A person's "upper soul (*hun*)" becomes a spirit (*shen*) and goes to heavenly realms, while his or her "lower soul (*po*)" becomes a ghost (*guei*) and is buried.

Mandate of Heaven

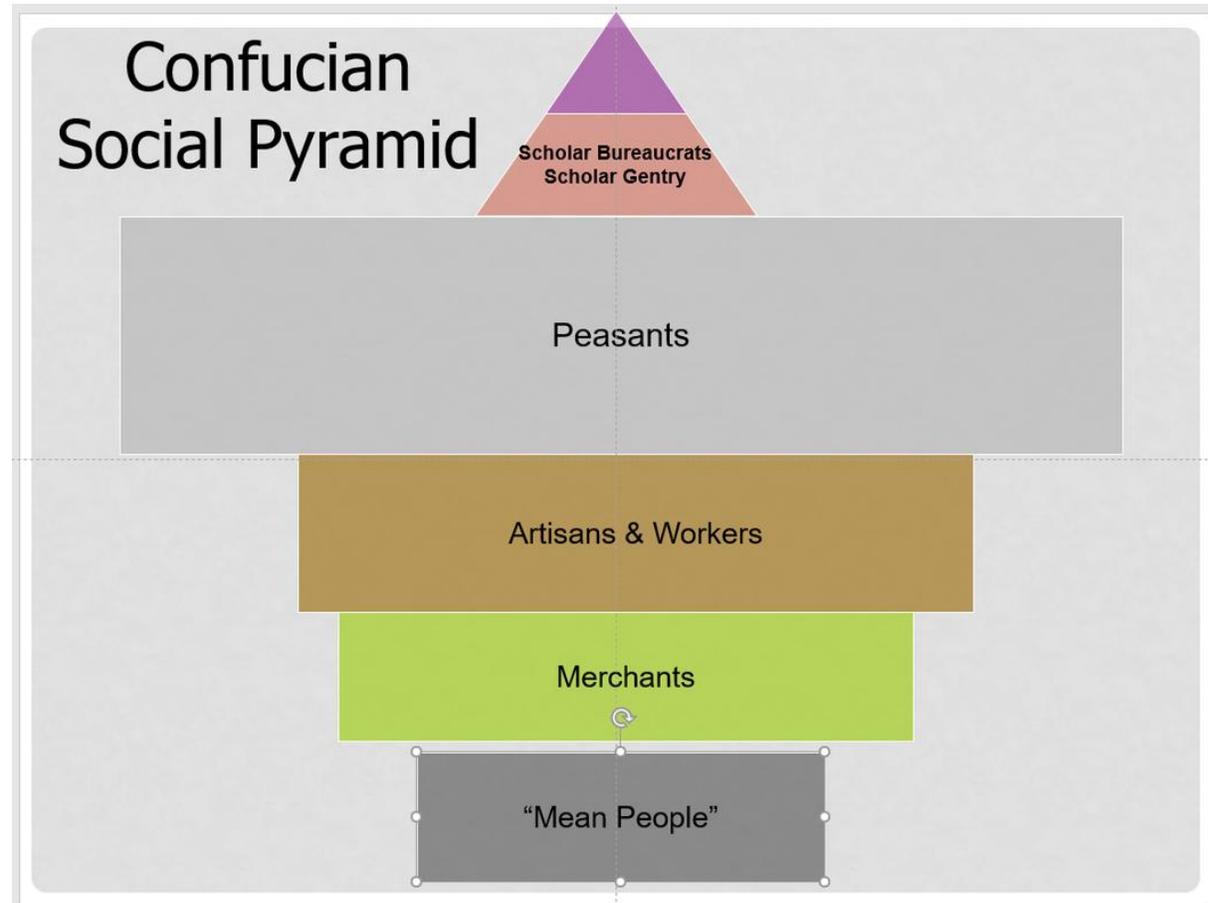
- Compare this to the divine right of kings practiced in the West



Distinctive Confucian practices

- Foretelling – forecast human events with *Yi-Jing* diagrams.
- Four major life passages
 - Birth – a pregnant woman is protected by the spirit of her unborn baby.
 - Transition to adulthood – chicken dinner with family and friends
 - Marriage
 - Proposal – rejected if a bad event happens in the three days after the proposal
 - Engagement – the bride sends wedding invitations with moon-shaped cookies
 - Dowry – Bride's father gives a dowry to the groom's father, while the groom's father gives a bride price to the bride's father. Meanwhile, the groom gives presents to the bride.
 - Procession – The groom and then the bride go to the homes of their future in-laws.
 - Marriage and reception – Vows and wedding dinner
 - Morning after – The bride prepares a feast for her new in-laws
 - Death – mourners wear coarse clothing and favorite foods of the deceased are placed into the coffin. Willow branches ensure that the dead one completes the passage to the next world. A Taoist or Buddhist priest officiates

Compare with Hindu caste system



The Mix (2)

- The preceding slides demonstrate the this-worldliness of Confucianism and the other-worldliness of Taoism. That is why people who follow either one will often follow both.

Conclusion

- Discussion



References

- H. Wayne House, Charts of World Religions, Zondervan, 2006