



Defining *Junzi* and *Ren*: Confucius as the Father of Professionalism

定義“君子”和“仁”：孔子系專業精神之父

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ABSTRACT. Confucius (552–479 B.C.) is a symbol of Chinese civilization. Despite his influence in the past two and a half thousand years, many of his ideas remain poorly defined, rendering them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by Chinese rulers domestically and to misreading and critiques by international communities globally. Among those ambiguities are the notions *Junzi* 君子 and *Ren* 仁, generically referring to a man of perfect virtue and his benevolent quality, respectively. In this article, the author examines the early experience of Confucius, analyzes his affiliation with *Ru* 儒, a social category with their origin from religious practitioners shamans, and sorts through various attributes that are associated with *Junzi* and *Ren*. He concludes that Confucius first and foremost was a private educator and an entrepreneur. Confucius lived in a time when there were market demands for quality education and training on state administration, arising from rivalries among numerous political powers at the time that in turn opened up the opportunity for upward mobility for common people. He started a private school that was accessible to all the people, regardless of their family backgrounds, as long as they could afford his tuition. In his teaching, Confucius developed and refined a set of values that correspond to the modern-day professionalism in the western society; he transformed the notion *Ren*, originally denoting a practice of sacrifice and martyrdom, to a professional quality, rejecting insignificant sacrifice in civil services and politics. His ideal personality, i.e. *Junzi*, was a professional in government administration, matching the very criteria specified by the definitions of profession and professionalism. *Ren*, the founding pillar of his ethics, gained the meaning that represents the ability or action to feel, vicariously, the feeling and needs of another and respond accordingly; it is the concept “empathy” in

today’s terms, a cornerstone of professional conducts. Regrettably, China took a different course from what Confucius would presumably expect after the State of Qin conquered other states and set up China into a centralized empire in 221 B.C. Professions and Professionalism had since lost its social environment to evolve further. Although professionalism as a social norm remain ill appreciated and barely practiced in China even today, Confucianism does potentiate Chinese with the quality and aspiration for a professional life, as evidenced by Chinese immigrants and their descendants in America where many of them unleash their potentials and flourish in professional fields. For his pioneering role in developing the critical concepts of professionalism, as well as for his lifelong pursuit of professionalism, Confucius deserves a position as the father of professionalism. The author projects that professionalism, the true heritage of Confucius, would eventually serve to walk China out of its dynasty cycle and offer a common ground for the nation to merge with the rest of world.

KEYWORDS. Confucius, Confucianism, Confucian, *Junzi* 君子, *Ren* 仁, *De* 德, *Dao* 道, *Shi* 士, *Ru* 儒, professionalism, professional, profession, empathy, self-interest

Introduction

Over the past two and a half millennia, Confucius has evolved into an icon of a major civilization. His thoughts and his personal life have become a source of inspirations to Chinese from all walks of life. Many of his ideas and words have turned into cultural imprints and maxims, some even clichés, in pan-Chinese communities worldwide; yet many of them remain surprisingly poorly defined from a standard of academic rigor. Such a status quo renders Confucius and Confucianism extremely vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by Chinese rulers domestically and to misreading and critiques by international communities globally.

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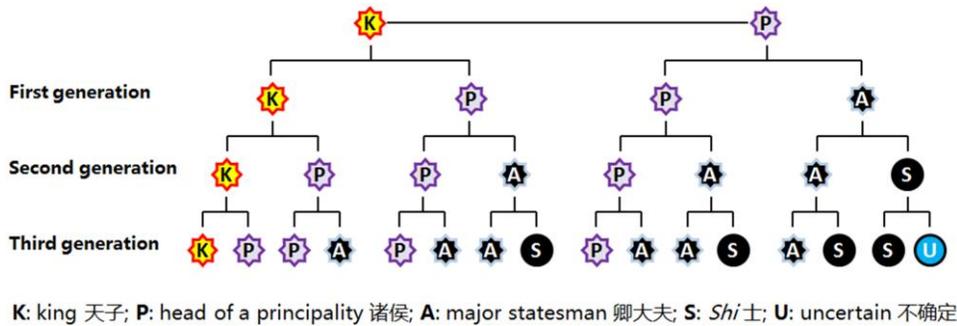


Figure 1. Designation of four major bureaucratic ranks over a period of three generations in the Zhou Dynasty in a hypothetical royal family, starting from two brothers. It is assumed that each male member of the family produces two sons. For simplicity, the rank for those who assist the Kings is not shown. The rank of the younger son of a *Shi* is not specified in the literature, marked as uncertain.

A central notion in Confucianism is a term that Confucius used frequently to refer to a paragon of virtue: *Junzi* 君子. Before his time, it was fairly clear that *Junzi* denoted a lord or a young man of high nobility, such as a prince (1, 2). Throughout his lifetime, Confucius had transformed the term, originally of socioeconomic designation, into an embodiment of ethical perfection, with *Ren* 仁 as his core attribute. Like many great pioneers in religion and philosophy, Confucius himself did not fully elaborate on the words *Junzi* and *Ren*; his successors had come up with some generic interpretations for the two terms. As such, English translators have used the words such as “superior man” for *Junzi* and “benevolence” for *Ren* in their works on *The Analects of Confucius* (3-12), a book ascribed to Confucius but actually compiled and edited by his disciples and followers* after his demise. The book documented his comments or interactions with his contemporaries, many of which were his responses to the questions from his disciples; it is one of a few credible references to the study of Confucius and his thoughts.

In this paper, the author examines the early experience and cultural background of Confucius in the context of his time. The author then analyzes various attributes associated with *Junzi* and *Ren*, as imparted in *The Analects of Confucius*. This research leads to the conclusion that Confucius was a pioneer in the practice of professionalism. Confucius was one of the first, if not the first, who had formulated a complete theory of professionalism, with *Ren* representing the ultimate manifestation of empathy.

1. The Early Experience and Cultural Background of Confucius

Confucius was born in the State of Lu in the Zhou Dynasty (1046–221 B.C.) in 552 B.C. (13) In Chinese history, it was a time when the Zhou Kingdom had lost its control over its principalities (states), of which many had gained de facto independence; those states competed with each other, some looking for people from other states to fill their lands and join their bureaucracies. Confucius’ birth also marked the beginning of a period when different philosophies and political ideas could be advocated, as hallmarked by Hundred Schools of Thought, before China became a centralized empire in 221 B.C. when Qin Dynasty declared its reign over the entire China and set up an institution that continues today. China in those days started to see opportunities for upward mobility for common people.

Confucius’ father Kong He was a military commandant of nobility (14, 15), with the rank of *Shi* 士. In the Zhou Dynasty, *Shi* was the lowest rank in the bureaucracy (16); it was either inherited or designated to those who were the younger sons of a higher rank holder, as noble families expanded and branched out in their lineages (Fig. 1). Unlike a head of principality or a major statesman, who typically held the title of duke or viscount, a *Shi* was not granted with a land or fief to live upon; instead he was expected to offer services to a duke or viscount to earn his living, typically as a warrior in wartime and a counselor or retainer in peacetime. In the feudal system, *Shi* thus constituted the supply of civil service workforce as well as a military reserve component. They also represented an educated social class

* In this article, the author uses “disciples” to refer to the students taught directly by Confucius, “followers” the indirect students who were taught by his disciples or their students, and “students of Confucianism” the scholars and students who learned and practiced Confucianism after Confucius’ thought was adopted as the state doctrine around 134 B.C.



who had the time and aptitude to attain and refine skills in the fields other than agriculture. As evident from Figure 1, a significant stratum of *Shi* could build up from zero in a society within just a few generations of a royal family, let alone nearly half a millennium into the same dynasty.

Kong He had nine daughters and a son from his earlier marriages. His son however had foot impairment, a condition that would disqualify him from serving in the military and inheriting the title of *Shi*. To beget an heir, Kong He married the young woman Yan Zhengzai when he was already old. The young wife prayed for a son on a hill and later indeed gave birth to a son. The couple honored her prayer by naming the baby boy after the hill (15), though the boy was addressed respectfully as Confucius after he became established. Kong He passed away when Confucius was three years old, leaving the boy and the young mother unsupported.

Zhou Dynasty is believed to have a well-developed education system for the juniors of its noble families (17). Its curriculum included subjects on six arts and six etiquettes: rites, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy and mathematics for arts and countenances in six different settings for etiquettes. Although there is no reference to Confucius' early education in the literature, this author is inclined to believe that Confucius had taken his privilege as a member of a noble lineage and finished a formal and normal education of his time for his rank, despite the fact that his father had already passed away and the family was not well off financially. Supporting this argument, 1) Viscount Meng Xi, one of the three leading statesmen in the State of Lu, told his sons that Confucius was a descendant of a noble family that had produced some eminent sages (18); 2) when Confucius had his son at the

age of twenty (13), the Duke of Lu sent him a fish to congratulate (15). This, together with the previous tale, indicates that Confucius' lineage was known to the ruler and administrators of his state and he was treated accordingly; 3) Confucius himself was consciously aware of his rank and certainly explored the opportunities that were presented to people of his class. When he was twenty-five years old, the premier of Lu Viscount Ji hosted a banquet for *Shi*, and Confucius went (19). Therefore Confucius could unlikely miss the benefits designated for his rank, including a formal education. Further supporting this argument, Confucius was expert at math, archery and charioteering (20-22), the three subjects on the curriculum of noble education. Of particular interest is his confidence in his mastery of charioteering. In his time in China, a military battle was fought between chariots. Each chariot nucleated an operational unit or squad, consisting of a dozen of soldiers on average, of whom two warriors and a steerer rode the chariot and led the attacks (23, 24). In emergency situations the steerer had to jump off the chariot to push, pull or move the chariot and he had to be physically strong. Confucius' own assessment of his skill in charioteering is consistent with the descriptions about his physical build and strength in the literature (25, 26). Because charioteering was a military-oriented skill involving teamwork and special equipment, i.e. a chariot and horses, it might not be easily acquirable through self-study; Confucius must have received formal training on the subject, which was aimed at preparing young noble descendants for their obligations in wars. Also noticeably, The Analects of Confucius describes his participation in archery contests, in a manner clearly showing the imprints of fine training (21).

However a standard education was apparently not

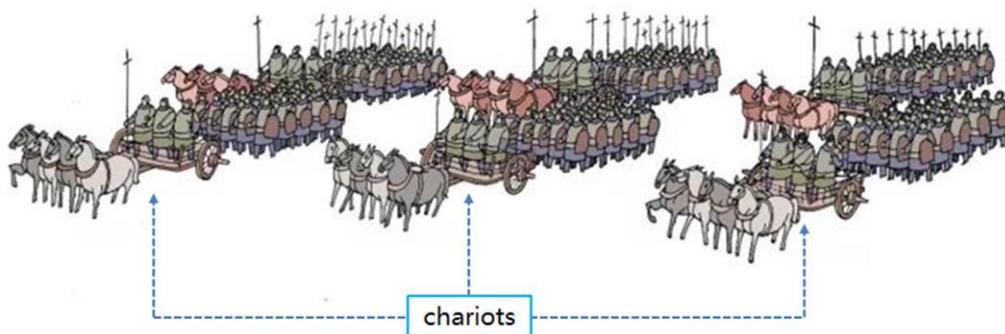


Figure 2. Chariot assembly in preparation for a battle in the Zhou Dynasty. Each chariot carried a steerer (middle) and two warriors, who led the attack; it was followed by a squad of walking soldiers. Only chariots in the front row were identified by arrows. The drawing is adapted from Note 24.



enough for Confucius to land a decent position. He later told one of his students vaguely that he had failed a “test” so he pursued six arts instead (27). The Chinese word Confucius used for “test” originally means “oral test.” So the “test” could be a job interview.

There might be a couple of reasons behind Confucius’ career setback. First, from a macroscopic perspective, the setup on passing and designating bureaucratic ranks and obligations in the Zhou Dynasty, as illustrated in Figure 1, seemed to help build a hierarchy of balanced authority and expertise within a noble family initially. As the family expanded after first few generations, however, a class of *Shi* would start to build up and so would come the competitions for available positions in state administration and services. In a family-based feudal system, people from families of waning nobility and dwindling size, such as Confucius, would be understandably disadvantaged in the job market.

Second, Confucius was likely discriminated for his heritage and cultural background.

Confucius was a descendant of a royal family in the Shang Dynasty (c. 1600–1046 B.C.). After the Zhou Dynasty replaced the Shang Dynasty, one of Confucius’ ancestors was designated as the duke of the State of Song (15). The State of Song however represented the adherents to the Shang Dynasty, who were different from the tribes that dominated the rest of the Zhou Kingdom. Therefore, the land and titles granted to Confucius’ ancestors should be viewed as a show of magnanimity and conciliation that the King of Zhou bestowed on his defeated rival.

People in the Shang Kingdom were known as skilled traders and merchants to the tribes outside their territory. Reflecting this historical perception, “商人,” the Chinese word for “businessman,” literally means “Shang people.” In the Shang Dynasty, there seemed to be quite evolution of trades and specialties. Among them were the divination and diverse rituals performed by shamans. Shang had a culture of animism. Its royal court heavily relied on divination for its operations; the result of each divination was recorded on an oracle shell (28). There are suggestions that some divining shamans might well be members of royal household or kings (29, 30). Such royal shamans,

together with shamans on other functions, say, medical healing, formed a body of privileged elites whose authority was based on their knowledge and their claim to the power that enabled them to communicate with deities, natural spirits, and ancestors. After the Shang Kingdom was overthrown, those shamans spread over in different states of the Zhou. They traded their knowledge and services for a living, often involved in rituals and ceremonies. Their successors grew along different specialties and formed a category of servicemen that were collectively known as *Ru* 儒 (31), or “Confucians” in the western literature.

When used as a noun to refer to *Ru*, the term “Confucian” is probably one of the biggest academic blunders ever made in connection with Confucius in the English world. Not only does it mislead readers, but it would also offend Confucius if Confucius were still alive and found out that his name is misrepresented. As readers would conclude from the rest of this article, Confucius had very mixed views, and mixed feelings as well, about *Ru*. In this paper, whenever appropriate, this author will use “Confucius’ followers” or “students of Confucianism” to refer to those who learned and practiced Confucius’ teachings, while keeping “*Ru*” to denote those who had their roots in the practice of early shamanism. Many *Ru* were Confucius’ followers, but not all *Ru* were Confucius’ followers, nor all Confucius’ followers were *Ru*. Being capable of differentiating Confucius’ true followers from different types of *Ru* is critical to critically understand Chinese history in general and Confucius in particular.

In his review on the evolution of *Ru*, Hu Shih in 1934 cited earlier annotations and pointed the origin of the Chinese character *Ru* 儒 to *Xu* 需 (meaning “need”) (31). Chinese characters are pictograph at root; they are created first by using simplified yet characteristic drawings to denote physical objects and then by modifying, assembling, or aggregating existing characters to represent abstract concepts. As such, the initial semantic designation of a Chinese character could often be revealed by examining the early versions of the character. The earliest version of the Chinese character *Xu* 需 has been identified in oracle shell inscriptions from the Shang Dynasty, appearing as a man with drops of water on both sides of his body (32). This has



been interpreted as a shaman taking a shower before performing a ritual. Another early version of the character is found on a bronze vessel, dating back to a time window about 350 years before the birth of Confucius (Fig. 3) (33). This character is composed of two characters “雨 (rain)” and “天 (sky),” joined vertically. The character seemingly specifies the nature of the water drops in the earliest version of *Xu*: they are the drops of rain, as part of the character “雨 (rain)” on the top of *Xu*. Under “雨 (rain),” the character “天 (sky)” appears as a man who is dancing. This composition suggests an alternative interpretation for *Xu*: *Xu* designates a ritual performed by a shaman who looks up to the sky and prays for rain, which is the “need.” Following this inference, it is interesting to note that Paul U. Unschuld made such a description on rainmaking rituals in ancient China (34): “Shamans had to carry out an exhausting dance within a ring of fire until, sweating profusely, the falling drops of perspirations produced the desired rain.” He took drops of perspirations from shamans as an incarnation of rain. His narrative could offer another interpretation for the earliest version of the character *Xu* (32). Together, analysis of the earliest versions of the character *Xu* 需 suggests that *Xu* and *Ru* have their very origin in the rainmaking rituals in the antiquity of China, a frequent event of the time (35).

Half a millennium into the Zhou Dynasty, *Ru* became a very heterogeneous group in terms of their socioeconomic statuses. While some were better off as retainers to prominent families, many others might have to travel from one village to another, just to secure an opportunity for a service such as a funeral ceremony (31). Despite that, *Ru* wore certain attire and hat that distinguished them as practitioners of specialty services. Confucius was a *Ru* too. He took up the practice of rituals since his early childhood (36).

The public perception of *Ru* was quite varied, however. Yan Ying, a contemporary of Confucius and then the prime minister to the State of Qi, remarked, “Those *Ru* are slick at talk and unbound by laws; they are arrogant and self-righteous, not fit to assist. They venerate funerals and prolong mourning, costing a fortune to perform an

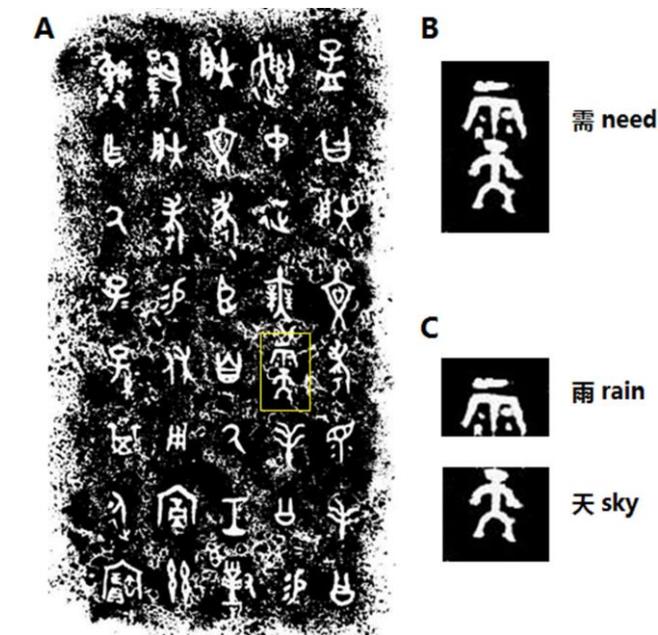


Figure 3. An early version of the Chinese character *Xu* 需 on the bronze vessel MengGui 孟簋 that dates back to circa 900 B.C. A) An ink replica of the inscription on the bronze vessel; the character *Xu* is identified within the yellow box. B) The character *Xu* from the inscription, after background noise is filtrated out. C) The character is dissected into two components, the character for “rain (雨)” on the top and the character for “sky (天)” at the bottom. The character for “rain” is derived from the image of rain drops from sky; the character for “sky” is from the image of an adult with his head emphasized, pointing to the notion “top” or “above.”

expensive funeral, not fit to guide custom. They lobby and ask for money, not fit to govern” (37).

In Yan Ying’s portrayal, *Ru* were slick and untrustworthy, aloof and pretentious, and crooked and money hungry. He made this comment specifically in reference to Confucius. Earlier, Confucius had met with the Duke of Qi and gained his trust. The Duke had planned to grant Confucius a fief. But Yan Ying applied the stereotype of *Ru* against Confucius. Confucius was denied the offer.

Confucius was 37 years old then and already an established educator and consultant. This incident could not likely be the one that had halted his early career advance and turned him into a field that required in-depth learning (27). Before this, Confucius had already done intensive study in music with Shixiang, consulted with Lao-Tze on rites, and enrolled Viscount Meng Xi’s both sons



(13, 18). Nevertheless, the incident highlights the prejudice that Confucius had to live with.

On the one hand, Confucius was certainly aware of some disturbing realities associated with some *Ru*. Later he encouraged one of his disciples to be a decent *Ru* but not a despicable *Ru* (38). He also distanced himself from anything involving natural spirits and deities (39, 40), which had been intrinsic to the practice of shamans and still constituted the justification for some services performed by *Ru*.

On the other hand, it might well be the pro-business culture among *Ru* that had cultivated Confucius' entrepreneurship. At age 23, Confucius started a private school on state administration and services. The school was open to all, regardless of their family backgrounds, as long as they could afford his tuition (41). His business was well received and there were clear demands for his education. Confucius himself taught or advised numerous students; his students were able to assemble a significant number of students as well. For example, one of his disciples Tantai Mieming enrolled three hundred students after he left Confucius and had his own school (42); after Confucius passed away, another disciple Bu Shang (a.k.a. Zixia or Tzu-hsia) took over a whole state and became the mentor to the ruler of the state (43). The fact that Confucius became an icon of Chinese civilization itself underscores the values of Confucius' education.

In his teaching, Confucius developed a set of standards for his students, some imprinted with the ethos of *Ru* while others countering the stereotype of *Ru*. From a modern perspective, what Confucius had formulated and promoted, once painstakingly sorted through and thoroughly analyzed, is professionalism.

2. *Junzi* as a Professional

When this author uses the phrase "from a modern perspective" in the previous section, he doesn't mean to apply an up-to-date concept of the term professionalism in his analysis. Instead, he merely refers to the facts that professionalism is a relatively young term, first introduced in 1856 in a time window that is recognized as a modern period of our history; before that, the word professionalism

was simply nonexistent (44). Since professionalism was adopted into use, the concept has undergone significant evolution in recent decades (45). For the purpose of this study, the author resorts to a somewhat classic definition of professionalism, assuming that it might be more relevant and productive to examine a historical phenomenon with a traditional view (46, 47), while keeping himself aware that incorporation of insights from recent elaborations would offer a more complete picture. With such an understanding, he would base his analysis initially on the comparisons to the attributes of early learned professions, such as medicine and divinity.

When Confucius spoke to his students, he often referred to *Junzi* as the standard for an ideal personality. Before his time, *Junzi* had been used to identify lords and young generations of royal families and ducal houses. Confucius however reshaped the notion into a measure of ethical implications, which could be applied to anyone regardless of his familial lineage. In his advice to his disciple Bu Shang, he said, "You shall be a *Junzi*-like *Ru*, not a petty man-like *Ru*" (38).

What constituted a *Junzi* in the mind of Confucius?

Despite countless efforts over the past 2,500 years or so, an unambiguous answer to the question remains missing. *Junzi* is still an intangible Chinese word that could be arbitrarily played either too godlily or too profanely. To approach the question, the author starts with such a consensus: Confucius is a *Junzi*—not only was he regarded as a *Junzi* by his contemporaries (48) but also he himself was comfortable with such a perception and occasionally he even hinted his standing of being a *Junzi* (49).

From this on, the author proceeds to assort various remarks about *Junzi*, from *The Analects of Confucius*, into different categories. This examination leads to the conclusion that the traits of a *Junzi* match with the qualities of a professional, as defined by both dictionaries and attributes of a profession (46).

2.1 *The job performed by a Junzi is not a trade nor a craft but a mission or calling*

Bu Shang is one of the most prominent disciples in Confucius' later years. He is credited for a major role in



transmission of Confucius' teachings after Confucius passed away (43). He made a clear distinction between trades and a *Junzi*'s work: "Craftsmen of different trades stay in their workshops to finish their jobs; a *Junzi* relies on learning to reach his *Dao*" (50). He also explained that "even in those little crafts, there must be something worthy of attention. A *Junzi* does not take up them because he is afraid of getting too far and becoming mired in them" (51).

In Chinese culture, "*Dao*" is another abstruse term. The root meaning of *Dao* corresponds to the "way," "road," "approach," "avenue," or "path." An observation by this author is that early classic Chinese is quite similar to English in terms of both semantics and grammar. Following semantic derivations, the meanings of *Dao* evolve further into "method," "tactic," or "technique" in one direction—just as in English—and the "aim," "process," or "consequence" of the "way" in another. In the latter case, *Dao* could be understood as "trek," "long-haul," "destiny," "truth," or, in Bu Shang's articulation, the "mission."

Confucius also made some similar comment. Apparently in response to a student's concern over the financial insecurity in pursuing a learned occupation, as opposed to a traditional farmer, Confucius dismissed the implication inherent in the question and said: "A *Junzi* pursues *Dao* but not food. If you farm, you may still run into the occasion of being hungry; if you learn, however, you may end up with the salary of an official. Anyway, a *Junzi* is concerned about the *Dao* but not the poverty" (52).

The pursuit of the mission comes with a sense of religious piety. Confucius said, "There is no way for a man to become a *Junzi* if he doesn't know his destiny" (53) and "A *Junzi* stands in awe of three things: providence, great men and sages" (54).

2. 2 Education and continued learning is required to be a *Junzi*

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a profession as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation." Ernest Greenwood deliberated on the nature of such knowledge and

characterized it as "an internally consistent system, called a body of theory," which are "abstract propositions that describe in general terms the classes of phenomena comprising the profession's focus of interest" (46). Learning and continued learning is a must to become and impart a *Junzi*, as elaborated repeatedly by Confucius and his disciples (50, 55). In a succinct way, Confucius outlined his "body of theory" specifically: "committed to the *Dao*, anchored to the virtue, based on the *Ren*, and steeped in arts" (56); the "arts" here, as in other places, referred to the six subjects on the curriculum of the time: rites, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy and mathematics.

Despite the importance of education and continued learning, Confucius made it clear that learning in itself was not the purpose. Rather, a *Junzi* learned to practice and apply. The very first verse of *The Analects of the Confucius* reads: "Is it not a pleasure to learn something and practice it at the right time" (57)? In a separate verse, Confucius subtly distanced a *Junzi* from an academic, saying, "When native quality outmatches acquired refinement, it would appear raw; when acquired refinement outmatches native quality, it would appear pedantry. Only when the two match one another gracefully would it become *Junzi*-like" (55). In this respect it is interesting to note that academics in the western society were not regarded as professionals even in 1846, when only divinity, medicine, and law were recognized as three learned professions (58).

2. 3 A *Junzi* is careful about his image of authority and words

Confucius was extremely careful about his interactions, especially his words, with others. When he was in his neighborhood, he was humble and appeared incapable of articulation; when he was with his peers in the court, he was eloquent in the absence of the duke; when the duke was present in the court, he was meticulous and sober (59, 60). He explained to his disciples, "A *Junzi*, if not appearing serious, would not be authoritative and his learning would not be solid" (61).

From an earlier perspective of professionalism, authoritative air of a professional is important to secure



clients' confidence in his service, which is based on his specific realm of knowledge. Confucius and his disciples had come to the same realization. One of Confucius' disciples Zigong (a.k.a. Duanmu Ci or Tzu-kung) said, "A *Junzi* could be judged knowledgeable by a single word he speaks; he could also be judged uneducated by a single word he speaks. A *Junzi* must be careful about what he is going to say" (62). Another disciple Zengzi (a.k.a. Tseng Tzu) also said, "There are three things which a *Junzi* values most in the *Dao*: putting on a serious countenance so to stay clear from rudeness and slight; setting a proper expression on face so to invite trust; speaking right words in right tones so to stay away from antipathy" (63). "*Dao*" here means "approach" or "methods" of interaction with others.

Such concerns over the potential damages that inappropriate remarks could do to the service of a *Junzi* led Confucius to prescribe a very conservative approach. He repeatedly advised his students that "a *Junzi* would like to be awkward at words but swift at actions" (64) and "a *Junzi* is ashamed of his words outmatching his actions" (65). He set up a standard against nonsense talks, "So to a *Junzi*, what is named by a *Junzi* must be presentable, what is said by a *Junzi* must be practicable. A *Junzi* is not casual on his words" (66).

2.4 A *Junzi* maintains appropriate relationship with his colleagues

The first verse of The Analects of Confucius contains a saying that is typically translated as "Is it not a joy to have friends come from afar" (57)? The word "friends" here, however, corresponds to two Chinese characters that meant "friends of the same aspiration" and "friends from the same school," respectively, or "colleagues" and "peers" in modern language. Confucius encouraged interactions with colleagues. His disciple Zengzi elaborated, "A *Junzi* relies on the learning to interact with colleagues and depends on colleagues to support *Ren*" (67).

Such interactions however were carefully managed, not to get too close and enter into any clique. Confucius said, "A *Junzi* is gregarious but not factional; a petty man is factional but not gregarious" (68). Similarly he remarked,

"A *Junzi* is sober but not contentious, and gregarious but not factional" (69).

The professional nature of these interactions is also reflected on the respect for a colleague's territory of expertise and responsibility. Confucius said, "Do not concern yourself with its matters of administration if you are not holding the office" (70). In this regard, it helps to be reminded that Confucius ran a school that trained students for administration and civil services.

2.5 A *Junzi* follows a formal dress code

Confucius was meticulous with his attire. He carefully matched the type and color of his dress to the season and setting (71). Even when he was sick and stayed on bed, in honor of the Duke who came to visit him, he draped over him the formal court robe and placed the grand sash across over it accordingly (72). His disciple Zilu later was killed in a coup. Before his death, Zilu tied his hat and proclaimed that "when a *Junzi* dies, his hat cannot be off" (73).

2.6 A *Junzi* is committed to public good

As callings, early professions typically promoted their practices as a benevolent concern for the well-being of others. Being a *Junzi* is no exception. Confucius said, "A *Junzi* helps others achieve their good endeavors but not their evil desires. A petty man is just the contrary" (74). He further elaborated, "If a man devotes to the *Ren*, he would stay away from the evil" (75). So what is the *Ren*?

3. *Ren* the ultimate "empathy"

The Analects of Confucius is organized into 20 chapters, or "books" as it was first translated into English by James Legge in 1861 (3). Each chapter is comprised of many separate pieces, of which most are short verses uttered by Confucius or his disciples. A total of 512 verses constitute the entire book. Of them *Ren* are mentioned in 59 verses and the Chinese character *Ren* (仁) appears 108 times (Table 1), more frequently than any other character that denotes another attribute of a *Junzi*. In Confucius' teaching, *Ren* is the founding pillar of a *Junzi*.



In his translation, James Legge treated the noun form of *Ren* equal to “virtue” most of the time. In six occasions he used the “benevolence” for *Ren* and in another two places he translated it to “beneficence” (Table 1). In the two sentences where *Ren* refers to “people of *Ren*,” he translated it to “the good” and simply “a man,” respectively. In Chinese the *bona fide* counterpart for “virtue” is the character *De* 德. There are two verses where both *Ren* and *De* appear in the same saying (56, 76). With Verse 7.6, James Legge compromised the *De* and translated it to “every attainment in what is good” while keeping the “virtue” for *Ren* (Table 2). For Verse 14.4, he returned the “virtue” to *De* and, very interestingly, translated the adjective form of *Ren* to “of principle” (3). Clearly he sensed some subtle nuance of the two Chinese characters: *Ren* is not just benevolence; there seems to be a tinge of “discipline” that is associated with the connotation of *Ren*.

Table 2 compares the translations of *De* and *Ren* in the two verses by different translators. Most treated *De* and *Ren* essentially indistinguishable, as some good trait of humanity (3-12, 77). However, Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont had a different insight (5); they specified *Ren* as something “authoritative,” echoing James Legge’s intuition. E. Bruce Brooks and A. Taeko Brooks took a more reserved approach, simply using the pronunciation for *Ren* and leaving the character unmatched in English (12). Tao Liang, a scholar in mainland China, also saw an element of rationality in the notion *Ren* (78).

In a separate paper (79), this author reviewed the literature and examined early versions of the Chinese character *Ren*. Of particular interest was the earliest preserved Chinese character *Ren* that was identified in 1981 on a bronze vessel (80). This character can be traced back to a time window about 300 years before the birth of Confucius. It is composed of two characters *Shi* 尸 (meaning “a dead boy”) and *Er* 二 (meaning “two”) (Fig. 4) and used exchangeable with the character *Shi* 尸, indicating that the original notion of *Ren* was associated with death. The author concluded that *Ren* originally denoted a practice in ancient China where a man with respectable social rank sacrificed himself to defend the codes of honor. Such a

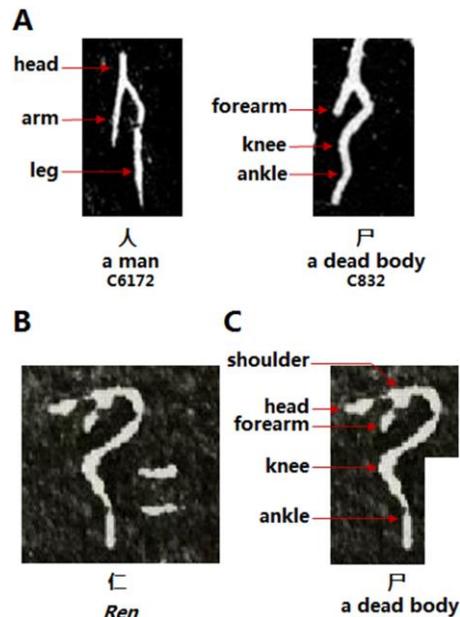


Figure 4. Original association of the notion *Ren* 仁 with death. A) The earliest version of Chinese characters for “人 (a man, left)” and “尸 (a dead boy, right)” in inscriptions on oracle shell from Shang Dynasty. The anatomical details in each character are indicated. Note deliberate twisting and bending in the part corresponding to the leg in the character 尸, to identify knee and ankle in a flaccid state. The C numbers designate the numbers assigned to the inscription collections where the characters are cropped (81). B) The Chinese character *Ren* 仁 on a bronze vessel, showing the character is composed of the characters “尸” and “二 (two, composed of two parallel short strokes). C) The “尸” component in the character *Ren* on the bronze vessel shows a drooping leg, characteristic of a dead body.

practice was a common expectation for people on a retinue, such as a *Shi* 士.

In his interactions with his students, Confucius however reshaped the notion *Ren*. The notion went through a semantic evolution and attained the following features:

3.1 *Ren is a quality of benevolence*

This is a well-recognized denotation of the concept. In response to the question from his disciple Fan Chi (a.k.a. Fan Ch’ih), Confucius said that *Ren* was about “loving people” (82). Confucius’ another disciple pointed the origin of *Ren* to the interactions and affections among family members, “Being filial as a son and being compliant as a younger brother is where the *Ren* roots” (83).

3.2 *Ren is invoked by the giver, who has the full autonomy to summon and deliver Ren*



Table 1. Translations of *Ren* in Different Verses by James Legge

Verse*	O**	Translation***	Verse*	O**	Translation***
1.2	1	benevolence	12.3	3	virtue
1.3	1	virtue	12.20	1	virtue
1.6	1	the good	12.22	3	benevolence; virtue; virtue
3.3	2	virtue	12.24	1	virtue
4.1	2	virtue	13.12	1	virtue
4.2	4	virtue	13.19	1	virtue
4.3	1	virtue	13.27	1	virtue
4.4	1	virtue	14.1	2	virtue
4.5	2	virtue	14.4 (14.5)	2	principle
4.6	7	virtue	14.6 (14.7)	2	virtue
4.7	1	virtue	14.16 (14.17)	3	virtue; beneficence; beneficence
5.5 (5.4)	2	virtue	14.17 (14.18)	1	virtue
5.8 (5.7)	4	virtue	14.28 (14.30)	1	virtue
5.19 (5.18)	4	virtue	15.9 (15.8)	3	virtue
6.7 (6.5)	1	virtue	15.10 (15.9)	2	virtue
6.22 (6.20)	2	virtue	15.33 (15.32)	3	virtue
6.23 (6.21)	3	virtue	15.35 (15.34)	2	virtue
6.26 (6.24)	2	benevolence; man	15.36 (15.35)	1	virtue
6.30 (6.28)	4	virtue	17.1	1	benevolence
7.6	1	virtue	17.6	2	virtue
7.15 (7.14)	2	virtue	17.8	1	benevolence
7.30 (7.29)	3	virtue	17.17	1	virtue
7.34 (7.33)	1	virtue	17.21	1	virtue
8.2	1	virtue	18.1	1	virtue
8.7	1	virtue	19.6	1	virtue
8.10	1	virtue	19.15	1	virtue
9.1	1	virtue	19.16	1	virtue
9.29 (9.28)	1	virtue	20.1	1	virtue
12.1	4	virtue	20.2	2	benevolence
12.2	1	virtue			

* Some verses in James Legge's work are numbered differently from the current consensus; they are indicated in the parentheses following the current designations.

** Occurrence: the number of appearance of the character *Ren* in the verse.

*** The translation for the character *Ren*, corresponding to the noun form of the word. In case that multiple *Ren* appear in the same verse and they are translated differently, the translation of each *Ren* is listed in the order of its appearance in the context. Translations different from "virtue" are shown in blue.



Table 2. Translations of *De* and *Ren* That Appear in the Same Verse

Verse 7.6 志于道，据于德，依于仁，游于艺。

<i>De</i> 德 (noun)	<i>Ren</i> 仁 (noun)	Note
every attainment in what is good	perfect virtue	3
power of the Way	goodness	4
excellence	authoritative conduct	5
integrity	humaneness	6
moral power	goodness	7
virtue	benevolence	8
virtue	humaneness	9
virtuousness	benevolence	10
integrity	humanity	11
virtue	<i>ren</i>	12
the high-principled	perfect virtue	78

Verse 14.4 有德者必有言；有言者不必有德。仁者必有勇，勇者不必有仁。

<i>De</i> 德 (adjective)	<i>Ren</i> 仁 (adjective)	Note
virtuous	of principle	3
of moral power	good	4
of excellent	authoritative	5
having integrity	humane	6
virtuous	good	7
of virtue	benevolent	8
having integrity	humane	9
virtuous	benevolent	10
of integrity	humane	11
with virtue	<i>ren</i>	12
virtuous	of moral principles	78

Confucius once articulated, “Is *Ren* that faraway? Whenever I desire it, here comes *Ren*” (84). In another occasion, Confucius said, “The practice of *Ren* depends on oneself; how could it depend on others” (85)?

3.3 *Ren* is manifested in different forms

The last king of the Shang Dynasty is said to be a tyrant, indulged in a licentious lifestyle and neglecting his administration duties. His brother left him. One of his

uncles gave up on him and pretended insanity, being degraded to a slave. Another uncle continued to remonstrate with him and ended up being killed by him. Confucius commended all three for being men of *Ren*, despite their different ways of dealing with the capricious king (86).

3.4 *Ren* is a measure more for job performance than for private life



Guan Zhong (a.k.a. Kuan Chung or Kwan Chung, c. 720–645 B.C.) was a prime minister of the State of Qi. Before his appointment, he was a retainer of Prince Jiu. Prince Jiu competed with his brother for the title of the State. He failed in the contest and was killed. Instead of sacrificing for his master, or “honoring *Ren*” as his peer, Guan Zhong survived and served the rival of his killed master as the prime minister (87). During his tenure, he successfully devised tax policies and applied economic incentives domestically (88-91), making the State of Qi a prosperous state. In working with other rival states, he preferred trade wars to military operations (92), making the State of Qi the leader among different states of the Zhou Kingdom. He was also instrumental in defending other states against invasions by barbarian tribes. In spite of his achievements, Guan Zhong was a controversial character at the time: He had deserted from his unit three times in his military services during wars; he had treated his business partner unfairly in his early life as a businessman; he had not sacrificed himself for his first master Prince Jiu; and he had lived a luxurious life of regal splendor. In refuting those complaints (93, 94), Confucius said: It was to the credit of Guan Zhong that the State of Qi was able to assemble all other states nine times as the hegemon, without resorting to any war; if it were not for Guan Zhong, Confucius and his disciples would have lived a barbaric life. He praised Guan Zhong as a man of great *Ren* and dismissed the complaints as petty men’s thinking.

On the other hand, Confucius did not have a good opinion of Guan Zhong as a person. He regarded Guan Zhong as a shallow mind and a coarse and conspicuous personality (95, 96).

The paradox suggests that Confucius had distinguished the notion *Ren* from *De* 德, i.e. virtue, a general mark on personal character: Although *Ren* was a quality that anyone could exercise anytime, it was not the same as virtue; a person who was regarded morally imperfect could still be a man of *Ren* in his public duty. When there were conflicting judgments involving the same person, Confucius preferentially employed *Ren* as a measure for job performance.

3.5 *Ren is discretion but not unconditional benevolence*

Among Confucius’ s disciples, Zai Yu (a.k.a. Tsai Wo) is a lively personality, witty and naughty, enjoying testing his teacher’ s limit. He posed a dilemma question for Confucius (97): “A man of *Ren* was told that another man of *Ren* had fallen into a well. Would he jump into the well to join the latter?” Confucius responded, “Why should he do that? A *Junzi* can go there to check out but shall not be trapped in the well. He could be deceived but shall not be framed up.” (Apparently Confucius alluded that Zai Yu set him up with the question.) Zai Yu ’s question was premised with the conception that, to live up to his reputation of being a man of *Ren*, one must be willing to sacrifice himself to save his fellow. Confucius was uncomfortable with the idea and advised discretion. This conversation is interesting in three aspects: First, it supports this author’ s conclusion that the notion *Ren* was perceived as a practice of sacrifice at the time (79). Second, it shows how Confucius developed his ideas from interactions with his students. Third, it marks a transition in the definition of *Ren*, as Confucius did not endorse unnecessary sacrifice; instead, he suggested weighing the outcomes of different options and incorporating a sense of discretion in practicing *Ren*.

3.6 *Certain manners are expected in connection with practicing Ren*

As an attribute of a *Junzi*, *Ren* is applied in connection with certain manners or qualities. Confucius said, ‘firmness, grit, simplicity and reticence are next to *Ren*’ (98). Fan Chi was a disciple of a simple mind. Confucius inclined to instruct him on “how” rather than “why” or “what.” On how to behave in accordance with *Ren*, Confucius said, “Be humble when staying home, be scrupulous when holding an office, and be faithful when treating others” (99).

3.7 *Ren is the ability or action to vicariously feel the needs of another and act accordingly*

Perhaps one of the best known quotes from Confucius, if not THE best known, is his comment on *Ren*, “Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you” (100). He advocated putting oneself in other’s shoes. In a separate occasion, he defined a man of *Ren* as someone who was



capable of projecting himself into other's needs and making an analogy, "So, a man of *Ren* helps others become established if he desires to establish himself, and helps others reach their goals if he desires to reach his. Being able to make analogies between his own situations and those of others around him could be called the approach to *Ren*" (101).

With all such characteristics, *Ren* matches the English word "empathy."

As defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, empathy is "the action (or the capacity for this action) of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner." In a layman's perception, empathy is the ability or action to feel or understand another person's experiences and emotions, although the word meant quite abstrusely and some differently when it was first introduced in 1909 (102).

Empathy derives its definition from *em-* + *pathos*. The prefix *em-* means "put in or on" and the root *pathos* means "feelings or emotion." Empathy thus denotes the action or ability to project oneself into other's needs and make an analogy. In the past decades, the word has evolved into a cornerstone of professional behaviors; it constitutes a normative expectation for any professional in his interactions with a client.

However, the word also has a connotation that most professionals would rather "empathize" than declare explicitly. In this regard, the prefix *em-* may well represent a doublet that embeds another prefix *e-*, meaning "out" or "away." In the professional world, empathy in reality denotes a process or capability of entering into a client's feeling and then coming out, to maintain certain professional distance. Such detachment would help uphold professional discretion from emotional disturbance when performing a service. The application of empathy places importance on rationality equally as on compassion. Accordingly, a professional is expected to assume certain manners or posture to ensure his control in his interactions with a client, such as avoiding unnecessary talks or jokes

that could bring people closer in a private setting but not desirable during a procedure.

This element of professional detachment or "aloofness" is seemingly not well received by the public, many of whom have taken empathy equal to sympathy, the latter designating more on emotion sharing and compassion. However empathy has seen its more and more popular use; it is likely that the word would eventually evolve into a term that incorporates more humane and benevolent consideration while reserving its specific inference to professionalism.

Ren would be a perfect word for such evolution. On the one hand, it is a vicarious quality associated with a *Junzi*, or a professional; it is inherently tinged with a tone of authority, as perceived by Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont (5). On the other hand, in the sphere of administration and civil services, *Ren* would direct a *Junzi* to understand the common people in his decision making and help promote social wellbeing and harmony, as contrary to merely entertaining a tyrant in a totalitarian regime. In such a specific context, *Ren* is endowed with a strong sense of humanity that may not be as evident in other professions. The author proposes to designate *Ren* as the ultimate empathy: while it denotes an essential trait of professionalism in everyday practice, it also signifies a sense of mission: to feel the suffering of people and to rise up to the call when the time comes.

It is worth noting that Confucius and his disciples had ascribed the origination of *Ren* to a family value: the respect for parents and siblings (83). The idea offers an interesting direction for future research on the relationship between early family education and workplace job training. The hypothesis might find itself well-founded. A human being is born self-centered, demanding attentions and cares from his surroundings. However an infant would soon learn to read his parents and siblings. Once he starts to show respect and appreciation for his family members, he would have developed the primitive capability of feeling his parents and siblings' emotional needs. That would be the entry to the empathy.



4. *Junzi*, *Ren*, and Professionalism: still a Chinese Dream

Confucius is one of the most influential people in human history. In the past century, Confucius in China however has gone through the transitions from a holy man to a reactionary devil, to a role model for disadvantaged youth, and now to an international ambassador for China. As China is exploiting Confucius as a cloak to cover its ambition and calculations worldwide, Confucius and Confucianism understandably start to meet resistance from international communities.

Part of the reason that Confucius is so vulnerable to political remodeling is the lack of sufficient information, credible, about Confucius' life. Scholarly inquiry into historical truth was rarely a tradition of China. Often, narratives of historical events and figures in China were built on claims and assertions, rather than on propositions, debates and evidence; and often, people of bureaucratic prominence had the final say on important topics if there was ever a debate.

With such awareness, the author in his study has relied heavily on the archaeological discoveries in recent decades, on the evolution of early Chinese characters in particular. The author is also cautious to distinguish the hallowed image of Confucius from his secular life, his thoughts and teachings in his later years from his early remarks, and his words, as compiled in *The Analects of Confucius*, from the interpretations and elaborations of his sayings by his successors, which are collectively known as Confucianism but which may deviate sharply from the original intentions of Confucius.

For example, conventional perception has imputed the authoritarian nature of Chinese society to Confucius, for he once said, "The ruler acts like a ruler, the subject a subject, the father a father, and the son a son" (37, 103). Confucius made this comment when he was 35 years old (13), in response to a question on government by Duke Jing of Qi, essentially in a job interview. His answer tactfully left the standards for "acting like a ruler" undefined. He was not offered with the job in the end, as the Qi premier Yan Ying hinted to Duke Jing that Confucius could not be trusted and counted on (37). Chinese rulers often cited this saying

to justify their repression and exploitation of people. The fact of matter is that Confucius consistently advocated benevolent and responsible government. At age 69, when his disciple Ran Qiu (a.k.a. Ziyou or Ran You), who had served him at the very personal level, worked for a statesman to increase tax, Confucius was so annoyed that he declared to expel Ran Qiu from his disciple list and mobilized his students to wage a public campaign to disgrace Ran Qiu (104).

In this approach, when his life is examined, Confucius first and foremost was a private education provider and a business owner. After he was married and had his son, Confucius started an education business to support his family at age 23 (13). He once said, "If wealth were plain attainable, I would go for it even if I have to be a hostler with a whip in hand. If it is not doable, I would follow my passion" (105, 106). His remark shows that he had quite a mundane desire for fortune as well, and his business was a result of pragmatic assessment. In his business operation, he accepted every student as long as the latter could afford his minimal tuition (41).

But Confucius did not turn his business into an assembly line or a diploma mill. He was serious with his work. A few factors might underpin his attitude and future achievements. First, he was a descendant of a royal family in the previous Shang Dynasty. His ancestors were known for serving the new Kingdom scrupulously and humbly (18). It would be consistent for Confucius to assume the same work ethics to defend his sense of pride and nobility. In his earlier careers as a bookkeeper and a manager of animal husbandry, Confucius had proven himself a competent employee (20). Second, he was a *Ru*. *Ru* had their origin from religious practitioners shamans in the Shang tribes. It has been proposed that shamans represented the first profession in early human societies (107). Indeed, *Ru* at Confucius' time had already imparted some attributes that would characterize a practitioner of an early profession, such as authoritative air, meticulous attention to procedural details, and specific attire and hat that identified their occupation (31, 37). Private teaching was among *Ru*'s fields of specialty practice. It would come naturally to Confucius to perform his job with a sense of seriousness



and formality typical of *Ru*. Third, Confucius was financially dependent on the business. Although Confucius held various positions in administration and private management, none of them lasted long or was rewarding enough, financially.

Confucius' school was to prepare students for positions in administration and consulting. In running his business, Confucius was sensitive to market expectations and good at incorporating his reflections into his teachings. As discussed earlier, Confucius had one of his major career setbacks at the age of 37: he was denied the offer from Duke Jing of Qi, apparently because he was a *Ru* and perceived as doing the Duke a lip service (37). In *The Analects of Confucius*, it was recorded repeatedly that Confucius advised his students to speak less, speak credibly and focus on the delivery (64-66). While it is not clear when Confucius offered those advices, it was definitely after his misfortune at the State of Qi when Confucius exhorted Bu Shang that "You shall be a Junzi-like *Ru*, not a petty man-like *Ru*" (38). Bu Shang was born in or about 508 B.C., the year when Confucius was already 44 years old. He joined Confucius' disciples in Confucius' later years (43).

For his students, Confucius adopted and refined a set of values. Among his efforts, of unparalleled humanitarian magnitude is his redefinition of the notion *Ren*.

In a separate paper, the author submitted that *Ren* initially designated a practice of sacrifice and martyrdom in which a man sacrificed himself to defend the code of honor in a time of crisis (79). Such a practice was common among *Shi* in the antiquity of China and could be easily abused (108). As such, *Ren* would expectedly be a frequent concern for clarification or discussion among Confucius' students, which might explain why the word "*Ren*" appears so many times in *The Analects of Confucius*. Clearly Confucius did not endorse sacrifice for something insignificant or unnecessary. Occasionally he seemingly tried to divert the questions on *Ren* and pointed to something elusive. Through elaboration and exchange with his students (93, 94, 97), Confucius transformed the notion *Ren* into a concept of empathy. He rejected the unwarranted sacrificial implication from the original meaning of *Ren*. This transformation marked a transition in political ethics in

China and conceptually stopped the brutality that had been imposed on staff in state administrations and private entourages. Just on this account alone, Confucius is a great humanitarian.

In his last few years when Bu Shang was among his disciples, Confucius apparently had developed his ethics into quite a mature set. When articulating the notion *Ren*, Bu Shang summarized it as follows (109):

Learning broadly and holding fast to your aspiration, asking pertinently and reflecting from the surrounding, throughout this resides the *Ren*.

In this verse, "reflecting from the surrounding" is a paraphrase of "making analogies between his own situations and those of others around him" in verse 6.30, uttered by Confucius in a conversation with his another disciple (101). In a few phrases, Bu Shang essentially recapitulated the major attributes that characterize a professional: 1) "learning broadly," i.e. learning and continued learning that constitute the foundation of a professional; 2) "holding fast to your aspiration," i.e. a sense of commitment to a calling; 3) "asking pertinently," i.e. professional distance and manners; and 4) "reflecting from the surrounding," i.e. vicarious analogy of empathy. In another comment, Bu Shang said that "Craftsmen of different trades stay in their workshops to finish their jobs; a *Junzi* relies on learning to reach his Dao (mission)" (50), unambiguously differentiating a *Junzi* from a skilled worker or craftsmen and defining *Junzi* as a learned career. Overall, Confucius and his disciples had shaped an occupation that was distinguished by a set of normative values which, in modern terms, is professionalism. They had developed a whole set of theory of professionalism around the notions *Junzi* and *Ren*. For his pioneering role in defining the critical concepts of professionalism *Junzi* and *Ren*, corresponding to a "professional" and "empathy," respectively, and for his lifelong pursuit of professionalism, Confucius deserves a position as the father of professionalism.

Yet Confucius and his followers had never been able to make their target occupation—state administration and consulting—into a true lasting profession in China.



Confucius lived his life in a time when China was a loose coalition of many different states, each typically operated by a ducal house and a few prominent families. In this feudal system, these prominent families were often related to the duke by blood (Figure-1). They lived on their fiefs as statesmen and local lords. They retained an entourage of various functions, including warriors and civilian staff, and looked for people of desired quality to join or replenish their retinues. They and the state bureaucracy constituted the employers for those interested in administration and services. In this job market, a prospective employee, such as a *Shi*, also had choices with respect to who he would like to work for. An established *Shi* might choose to work as a freelance consultant, commuting to different states and meeting with different dukes and local lords, to offer advices, pass on messages, and mediate conflicts. Because of intricate political interplays among statesmen either within a state or across the Zhou Kingdom, there were demands for people with certain particular set of skills or training to fill entourages or to act as political advisors or middlemen. As such, there seemed to be a good market base to support the genesis of a profession in state administration and political consulting. Confucius was prescient in capturing the trend. Within two centuries after his demise, one statesman kept a retinue consisting of as many as 3,000 people (110) and a lobbyist became the prime minister for six states (111). His own disciple Bu Shang gained the status of being a mentor to the ruler of a state (43). There was a conflict, however, intrinsically associated with the "profession." For Confucius and his followers to integrate into bureaucracies or retinues, they would have to surrender much of their independence and discretion, which is a benchmark of any profession. This was especially true after Qin Shi Huang established the first centralized Chinese empire in 221 B.C. From a traditional view of social structure, even though Confucianism was designated as the official ideology of China around 134 B.C. (112) and students of Confucianism had been placed on the bureaucratic track for much of China's history, government was not regarded as a profession; rather it was an occupational sector parallel to business and profession (47). Even today, when government administrators in the U.S. are

often referred to as professionals, Chinese officialdom rarely lives up to the implication of such reference, which means the best public services independent of political views or partisanship.

In a broader scope, nor had China seen much evolution of other professions and, as such, nor has professionalism ever become a social norm in China, for China for most of its past history discouraged its people from pursuing self-interest and individual rights; professions and professionalism lost their base of support.

Irrespective of how the connotation of professionalism would continue to evolve, professionalism is the characterization of professions and a profession is built on four conceptual components at bottom: 1) it is a service that often requires long and intensive preparation; 2) It is an individualized commitment to the best; 3) it is a practice trusted with autonomy; 4) it is a full-time job that is financially and socially rewarding in terms of self-interest, such as salary, status and power. Although early professions emphasized the social significance of their work and often presented their members as altruistic practitioners, self-interest is a motivation for most individuals in pursuing and practicing a profession; some even asserts that professionalism serves to promote and protect self-interest (45, 113, and 114). Regarding the last claim, Adam Smith's invisible hand might be the guide, as Ian Maitland elaborated, "there are some surprising affinities between self-interest and morality. Notably the principal force that checks self-interest is self-interest itself. Consequently, self-interest often coincides with and reinforces the commands of morality and promotes civility and consideration for others. Therefore it provides us with resources for constructing a more humane and civil society" (115).

As an educator, Confucius certainly had a rewarding career, even judged only financially. Confucius rarely talked about profit and gain (116). But he ran a business and by default he sought financial interest. He charged a minimal fee of a bundle of dried meat in teaching or advising a student (41). In his time, meat was a precious commodity. When his son was born, the Duke of Lu sent him a carp to congratulate (15). When he was in a job interview with Duke Jing of Qi and presented his view on government as "The



ruler acts like a ruler ...," Duke Jing' s immediate response was "Great! If the ruler is not like a ruler ..., even if there is millet, how could I have it and get fed?" (37) Apparently even a duke in those days mainly lived on high-carbohydrate diets. More than a hundred and fifty years later, one of Confucius' successors Mencius portrayed a well-governed ideal society in which the most respectable elderly could have meat to eat (117), indicating that meat was a symbol of prosperity for an average family at the time. It is claimed that Confucius had taught or advised a total of 3,000 students. Divulging his financial well-offness, Confucius lived a quite comfortable and long life (118): he enjoyed fine foods—only well prepared and presented—and drunk quite capably; he passed away at the age of 73, rare in his time.

Confucius' early followers were also conscious of their self-interests. In the last chapter of *The Analects of Confucius*, it is advocated, in the name of King Wu of Zhou, that "Kings of Zhou gave big and the good became the rich. 'Although I have relatives of my Zhou clan, they are not as good as people of Ren. If common people commit a fault, I am the single person to assign the blame to' " (119). This chapter is quite different from the rest of the book in terms of language style; it is more like an addendum of a student' s elaboration on Confucius' ideas. It thus reflects the collective appeal of Confucius' s early followers to Chinese rulers: to be rich but to be released from fault liability, which should be borne by the decision-making rulers. This expectation, or more appropriately, soft lobbying, is commensurate with the self-perception that Confucius' early followers had for themselves: consultants and good people of Ren.

Such awareness of self-interests would expectedly lead to more specific assertions of various rights. *The Analects of Confucius* recorded a conversation between Confucius and one of his favorite disciples Zigong (120), i.e. Duanmu Ci:

Zigong asked, "Does *Junzi* have abominations also?"
(Here Confucius was addressed respectively as *Junzi*.)

Confucius said, "Yes, he has. He abhors those who call good what is evil side of human nature; he abhors those

who are subordinates but defame their supervisors; he abhors those who are bold and uncivil; he abhors those who are resolute but not receptive to reason."

Confucius then asked, "Ci, you have your abominations too?" (Ci is Zigong' s formal first name.)

Zigong replied, "I abhor those who plagiarize others' work and claim they are smart and knowledgeable; I abhor those who are not humble but claim valor; I abhor those who expose and attack others' privacy and call it integrity."

In this conversation, Zigong clearly touched on the topics of intellectual property right and the right to privacy, apparently pertinent to his background and experience as a successful merchant and politician. His picture of an ideal world was not much different from a healthy modern society. Had Confucius' followers—and students of other thought schools as well—been allowed to continue to explore, discourse and assert their self-interests and individual rights, China would have developed a social segment of various professions very early.

However, China took a totally different course after the State of Qin conquered other states and set up China into a centralized empire in 221 B.C. Earlier, *Shi* as a social stratum had already lost many of their privileges in the State of Qin during its rise, which was built largely on the initiative launched by a statesman Shang Yang (c.390–338 B.C.), who enforced a policy that converted the State essentially into a wartime production line where self-interest must be surrendered to the State and the only jobs permissible to most people were farmer and soldier. Noble families and their entourages were targeted by Shang Yang; many of them were forced to either join the army or cultivate the land (121-124). In the State, learning was discouraged and educating common people was disallowed (125, 126). People occupied with commerce but living in poverty would risk being degraded to slaves (127). Shang Yang' s policy undermined a very social component and mechanism that could have served as an incubator for evolution of various professions. After Qin claimed its reign over the entire



China, the first Chinese emperor Qin Shi Huang seemed to experiment with a peacetime attitude towards scholars and *Ru* in the first eight years. He consulted with *Ru* on a grand ceremony to worship the Heaven and the Earth in 219 B.C. (128) His court was apparently quite accessible to scholars and *Ru*, as revealed in an argument made by his prime minister Li Si in 213 B.C. (129) In the argument, which was aimed at responding to the question about the setup of the new government, Li Si accused scholars and *Ru* of speaking empty rhetoric in front of the emperor for fames, valuing liberal interpretation as brilliant, criticizing current government based on what they had learned from the past, and spreading rumors and causing confusion among people; such situation, if not forbidden, he concluded, would weaken the power of the ruler and brew various cliques. Li Si articulated that times had changed from the old days when scholars had been treated generously for their lobbying and ideas by different states, as those states were competing with each other then. As the nation had been unified under one single emperor, *Shi* should learn government policies and laws only, and from government officials only. He submitted to the emperor that all the books that pertained to no pragmatic application should be collected and burned and those who dared to discuss the classics should be executed in public. He received the assent from Qin Shi Huang.

The next year, two alchemists vanished. Earlier, they had claimed that they were able to communicate with natural spirits and promised to search for longevity and anti-aging medicines for the emperor. They had received generous support, trust and largess from the emperor. Apparently out of the fear that they would get the death penalty if they failed to deliver the medicines, they disappeared. Before they ran, they spread rumors to excuse themselves and blame the emperor. When the emperor learned that, he was infuriated. He ordered an investigation and identified 460 odd people implicated in spreading rumors. He ordered the execution of them by burying alive (130).

Within the same period, there were two other alchemists who had also disappeared, after swindling a tremendous amount of money out of the emperor (130).

These incidents, well known in Chinese history as “the burning of books and burying of scholars,” highlighted the first clashes between a Chinese emperor and the educated minds and specialty practitioners. They are the topic of countless discussions and discourses. One popular interpretation of the events is that they show the persecution of “Confucians” by a Chinese dictator. Relevant to this article, the author would like to point out the following observations: 1) at least in the first eight years of the empire, the first emperor appeared quite tolerant of scholars and *Ru*; 2) there were many other thought schools — “think tanks” in today’s words—that were active at the time, in addition to Confucianism; 3) the Premier Li Si wanted to ban all the classics from the past, not just those related to Confucius; 4) Li Si specifically targeted those who were interested in government and law, integrating them into the bureaucracy and thus stifling the evolution of an independent early profession, i.e. the practice of law; 5) the acts of those few alchemists, who were clearly a type of *Ru* or “Confucians”, and some of Li Si’s comments on scholars echoed the stereotypic portrayal that Yan Ying had made three hundred years ago (37), such as “slick at talk” and “lobby and ask for money.” As amply discussed and cited earlier, those stereotypes were exactly what Confucius had tried to correct among his students. For example, Confucius had cautioned his students against lip services and formation of any clique (64-66, 68, 69). The author wonders what Confucius might have advised if he were still alive at the onset of the first Chinese empire. Would he have been able to avert the clashes and win the room for professions and professionalism to evolve further? These incidents illustrate one observation of this author: over Chinese history, again and again, Confucius is mistakenly identified in or assigned blame for things or ideas that he would disapprove.

Qin was a very short-lived dynasty. It was replaced by the Han Dynasty in 202 B.C. Soon Confucianism won the endorsement from the imperial house, becoming the state doctrine (112). Since their lobby for the official status of Confucianism, students of Confucianism had aligned themselves with the expectations of the Chinese rulers. Facing the spread and influence of Buddhism in China,



which promoted austerity, they later surrendered more of their self-interest claims. For example, China in Song Dynasty (960–1276) was a wealthy and pragmatic society; there emerged some signs of professionalism in state administration. Even in such a dynasty, when annotating verse 7.7 of *The Analects of Confucius* (41), Zhu Xi (1130–1200), a scholar of the so-called Neo-Confucianism, spent quite some words trying to come up with an interpretation to trivialize the financial significance of the fee that Confucius charged each of his students: a bundle of dried meat (131).

On another aspect, Chinese rulers since Qin Dynasty had been enforcing a “pro-agriculture and anti-commerce” policy (with Song dynasty as an exception), ideologically discriminating against commerce and officially designating merchants in the lowest social rank. This directed a culture that was antagonistic to pursuing direct financial interest, which in turn discouraged people from investing in lengthy learning and training to gain their expertise and perfect their services. Without a market support, professions were difficult to grow and professionalism hardly able to become a significant social norm.

Such a culture orientated some Chinese into an alternative to seek self-interest, which often turned out to be more lucrative. Instead of committing themselves to long-term learning and practice to offer the best products or services possible, Chinese elites sought to occupy or connect to higher offices in the pecking order of a bureaucracy to gain more control of public resources. Such an approach inevitably led to corruptions and frauds, and eventually to revolution and dynasty changes, or dynasty cycle (132), each time at the cost of the public good in terms of countless lives and fortunes destroyed in civil strife.

On a different note, Confucianism does potentiate Chinese with the quality and aspiration for a professional life. Such a predisposition is evident among Chinese immigrants and their descendants in western society where many of them unleash their potentials and flourish in professional fields. Their success suggests a common ground for China to merge with the rest of world: professionalism and empathy, as experimented and promoted by Confucius two and a half millennia ago.

Notes

1. 《詩經·伐檀》：彼君子兮，不素餐兮！
2. 《詩經·關雎》：窈窕淑女，君子好逑。
3. Legge, J. (Trans.). (1861). Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean. In *The Chinese Classics, Vol. I*. Hong Kong: London Missionary Society.
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9. Watson, B. (Trans.). (2007). *The Analects of Confucius*. New York: Columbia University Press.
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11. Hinton, D. (Trans.). (2013). *The Four Chinese Classics*. Berkeley: Counterpoint.
12. Brooks, E.B, and Brooks, A.T. (Trans.). (1998). *The Original Analects: Sayings of Confucius and His Successors*. New York: Columbia University Press.
13. Liang, T. 梁濤. (2010, January 28). 孔子行年考. [Online] Available: http://news.ifeng.com/history/zhuanjialunshi/liangtao/detail_2010_01/28/322195_0.shtml. [Accessed 2018, November 26]. (Comment: This series is used as the timeline reference for Confucius.)
14. 《春秋左傳·襄公十七年》：齊人以其未得志於我故，秋，齊侯伐我北鄙，圍桃。高厚圍臧紇於防。師自陽關逆臧孫，至於旅松。郟叔紇、臧疇、臧賈帥甲三百，宵犯齊師，送之而復。齊師去之。
15. 《孔子家語·本姓解》：孔子之先，宋之後也。微子啟、帝乙之元子，紂之庶兄。以圻內諸侯，入為王卿士。微、國名，子爵。初，武王克殷，封紂之子武庚於朝歌，使奉湯祀。武王崩，而與管、蔡、霍三叔作難。周公相成王東



- 征之。二年，罪人斯得，乃命微子於殷後，作《微子之命》由之，與國於宋，徙殷之子孫。唯微子先往仕週，故封之賢。其弟曰仲思，名衍，或名洩。嗣微子後，故號微仲。生宋公稽。胄子雖遭爵易位，而班級不及其故者，得以故官為稱。故二微雖為宋公，而猶以微之號自終，至於稽乃稱公焉。宋公生丁公申。申公生緡公共及襄公熙。熙生弗父何及厲公方祀。方祀以下，世為宋卿。弗父何生送父週。週生世子勝。勝生正考甫。考甫生孔父嘉。五世親盡，別為公族。故後以孔為氏焉。一曰：孔父者，生時所賜號也，是以子孫遂以氏族。孔父生子木金父。金父生辜夷。辜夷生防叔，避華氏之禍而奔魯。防叔生伯夏。夏生叔梁紇。曰：“雖有九女，是無子。”其妾生孟皮，孟皮一字伯尼，有足病，於是乃求婚於顏氏。顏氏有三女，其小曰徵在。顏父問三女曰：“暋大夫雖父祖為士，然其先聖王之裔。今其人身長十尺，武力絕倫，吾甚貪之，雖年大性嚴，不足為疑。三子孰能為之妻？”二女莫對。徵在進曰：“從父所製，將何問焉？”父曰：“即爾能矣。”遂以妻之。徵在既往，廟見，以夫之年大，懼不時有男，而私禱尼丘山以祈焉。生孔子，故名丘字仲尼。孔子三歲而叔梁紇卒，葬於防，至十九，娶於宋之上官氏。生伯魚。魚之生也，魯昭公以鯉魚賜孔子，榮君之貺。故因以名鯉，而字伯魚。魚年五十，先孔子卒。
16. Theobald, U. (2018, October 6). Zhou Period Political System. *ChinaKnowledge.de*. [Online] Available: <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/zhou-admin.html>. [Accessed 2018, November 26].
17. 《周禮·地官司徒·保氏》：掌諫王惡，而養國子以道。乃教之六藝：一曰五禮，二曰六樂，三曰五射，四曰五馭，五曰六書，六曰九數。乃教之六儀：一曰祭祀之容，二曰賓客之容，三曰朝廷之容，四曰喪紀之容，五曰軍旅之容，六曰車馬之容。凡祭祀、賓客、會同、喪紀、軍旅，王舉則從；聽治亦如之。使其屬守王闈。
18. 《春秋左傳·昭公七年》：九月，公至自楚，孟僖子病不能相禮，乃講學之，苟能禮者從之，及其將死也，召其大夫曰，禮，人之幹也，無禮無以立，吾聞將有達者，曰孔丘，聖人之後也，而滅於宋，其祖弗父何，以有宋而授厲公，及正考父佐戴，武，宣，三命茲益共，故其鼎銘雲，一命而偃，再命而偃，三命而俯，循牆而走，亦莫餘敢侮，饘於是，鬻於是，以糊餘口，其共也如是，臧孫紇有言曰，聖人有明德者，若不當世，其後必有達人，今其將在孔丘乎，我若獲沒必屬說與何忌於夫子，使事之而學禮焉，以定其位，故孟懿子，與南宮敬叔，師事仲尼，仲尼曰，能補過者，君子也，詩曰，君子是則是效，孟僖子可則效已矣。
19. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孔子世家》：孔子要經，季氏饗士，孔子與往。
20. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孔子世家》：孔子貧且賤。及長，嘗為季氏史，料量平；嘗為司職吏而畜蓄息。由是為司空。
21. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 3.7 《論語·八佾》：子曰：“君子無所爭。必也射乎！揖讓而升，下而飲。其爭也君子。”
22. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 9.2 《論語·子罕》：達巷黨人曰：“大哉孔子，博學而無所成名。”子聞之，謂門弟子曰，“吾何執？執禦乎？執射乎？吾執禦矣。”
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25. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孔子世家》：孔子長九尺有六寸，人皆謂之“長人”而異之。
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27. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 9.7 《論語·子罕》：牢曰：“子云：‘吾不試，故藝。’” (Comment: “試” originally means oral test.)
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36. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孔子世家》: 孔子為兒嬉戲, 常陳俎豆, 設禮容.
37. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孔子世家》: 景公問政孔子, 孔子曰: “君君, 臣臣, 父父, 子子。” 景公曰: “善哉! 信如君不君, 臣不臣, 父不父, 子不子, 雖有粟, 吾豈得而食諸!” 他日又復問政於孔子, 孔子曰: “政在節財。” 景公說, 將欲以尼谿田封孔子。晏嬰進曰: “夫儒者滑稽而不可軌法; 倨傲自順, 不可以為下; 崇喪遂哀, 破產厚葬, 不可以為俗; 遊說乞貸, 不可以為國。自大賢之息, 周室既衰, 樂缺有間。今孔子盛容飾, 繁登降之禮, 趨詳之節, 累世不能學, 當年不能究其禮。君欲用之以移齊俗, 非所以先細民也。”
38. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 6.13 《論語·雍也》: 子謂子夏曰: “女為君子儒! 無為小人儒!”
39. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 7.21 《論語·述而》: 子不語怪, 力, 亂, 神。
40. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 6.22 《論語·雍也》: 樊遲問知。子曰: “務民之義, 敬鬼神而遠之, 可謂知矣。”
41. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 7.7 《論語·述而》: 子曰: “自行束脩以上, 吾未嘗無誨焉。”
42. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·仲尼弟子列傳》: 澹臺滅明, 武城人, 字子羽。少孔子三十九歲。狀貌甚惡。欲事孔子, 孔子以為材薄。既已受業, 退而修行, 行不由徑, 非公事不見卿大夫。南遊至江, 從弟子三百人, 設取予去就, 名施乎諸侯。孔子聞之, 曰: “吾以言取人, 失之宰予; 以貌取人, 失之子羽。”
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49. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 5.3 《論語·公冶長》: 子謂子賤, “君子哉若人! 魯無君子者, 斯焉取斯?”
50. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 19.7 《論語·子張》: 子夏曰: “百工居肆以成其事, 君子學以致其道。”
51. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 19.4 《論語·子張》: 子夏曰: “雖小道, 必有可觀者焉; 致遠恐泥, 是以君子不為也。”
52. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 15.32 《論語·衛靈公》: 子曰: “君子謀道不謀食。耕也, 饒在其中矣; 學也, 祿在其中矣。君子憂道不憂貧。”
53. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 20.3 《論語·堯曰》: 子曰: “不知命, 無以為君子也; 不知禮, 無以立也; 不知言, 無以知人也。”
54. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 16.8 《論語·季氏》: 孔子曰: “君子有三畏: 畏天命, 畏大人, 畏聖人之言。”
55. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 6.18 《論語·雍也》: 子曰: “質勝文則野, 文勝質則史。文質彬彬, 然後君子。”
56. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 7.6 《論語·述而》: 子曰: “志於道, 據於德, 依於仁, 游於藝。”
57. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 1.1 《論語·學而》: 子曰: “學而時習之, 不亦說乎? 有朋自遠方來, 不亦樂乎? 人不知而不慍, 不亦君子乎?”
58. Fisher, R. (Ed.). (1846). "Statistics of the State of New-York". *Fisher's National Magazine and Industrial Record*. R. Fisher. 3 (3): 234.
59. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 10.1 《論語·鄉黨》: 孔子於鄉黨, 恂恂如也, 似不能言者。其在宗廟朝廷, 便便言, 唯謹爾。



60. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 10.2 《論語·鄉黨》：朝，與下大夫言，侃侃如也；與上大夫言，聞聞如也。君在，蹏蹏如也，與與如也。
61. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 1.8 《論語·學而》：子曰：“君子不重，則不威；學則不固。”
62. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 19.25 《論語·子張》：子貢曰：“君子一言以為知，一言以為不知，言不可不慎也！”
63. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 8.4 《論語·泰伯》：曾子言曰：“...君子所貴乎道者三：動容貌，斯遠暴慢矣；正顏色，斯近信矣；出辭氣，斯遠鄙倍矣。”
64. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 4.24 《論語·里仁》：子曰：“君子欲訥於言，而敏於行。”
65. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 14.27 《論語·憲問》：子曰：“君子恥其言而過其行。”
66. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 13.3 《論語·子路》：子曰：“...故君子名之必可言也，言之必可行也。君子於其言，無所苟而已矣！”
67. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.24 《論語·顏淵》：曾子曰：“君子以文會友，以友輔仁。”
68. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 2.14 《論語·為政》：子曰：“君子周而不比，小人比而不周。”
69. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 15.22 《論語·衛靈公》：子曰：“君子矜而不爭，群而不黨。”
70. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 14.26 《論語·憲問》：子曰：“不在其位，不謀其政。” 曾子曰：“君子思不出其位。”
71. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 10.6 《論語·鄉黨》：君子不以紺緇飾，紅紫不以為褻服。當暑，袵絺綌，必表而出之。緇衣，羔裘；素衣，麕裘；黃衣，狐裘。褻裘長，短右袂。必有寢衣，長一身有半。狐貉之厚以居。去喪，無所不佩。非帷裳，必殺之。羔裘玄冠不以吊。吉月，必朝服而朝。
72. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 10.19 《論語·鄉黨》：疾，君視之，東首，加朝服拖紳。
73. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·衛康叔世家》：仲由將入，遇子羔將出，曰：“門已閉矣。”子路曰：“吾姑至矣。”子羔曰：“不及，莫踐其難。”子路曰：“食焉不辟其難。”子羔遂出。子路入，及門，公孫敢闔門，曰：“毋入為也！”子路曰：“是公孫也？求利而逃其難。由不然，利其祿，必救其患。”有使者出，子路乃得入。曰：“太子焉用孔悝？雖殺之，必或繼之。”且曰：“太子無勇。若燔台，必舍孔叔。”太子聞之，懼，下石乞、孟賁敵子路，以戈擊之，割纓。子路曰：“君子死，冠不免。”結纓而死。
74. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.16 《論語·顏淵》：子曰：“君子成人之美，不成人之惡。小人反是。”
75. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 4.4 《論語·里仁》：子曰：“苟志於仁矣，無惡也。”
76. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 14.4 《論語·憲問》子曰：“有德者必有言；有言者不必有德。仁者必有勇，勇者不必有仁。”
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82. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.22 《論語·顏淵》：樊遲問仁。子曰：“愛人。”
83. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 1.2 《論語·學而》：有子曰：“其為人也孝弟，而好犯上者，鮮矣；不好犯上，而好作亂者，未之有也。君子務本，本立而道生。孝弟也者，其為仁之本與！”
84. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 7.30 《論語·述而》：子曰：“仁遠乎哉？我欲仁，斯仁至矣。”
85. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.1 《論語·顏淵》：顏淵問仁。子曰：“...為仁由己，而由人乎哉？”
86. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 18.1 《論語·微子》：微子去之，箕子為之奴，比干諫而死。孔子曰：“殷有三仁焉！”
87. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·管晏列傳》：管仲夷吾者，潁上人也。少時常與鮑叔牙游，鮑叔知其賢。管仲貧困，常欺鮑叔，鮑叔終善遇之，



- 不以為言。已而鮑叔事齊公子小白，管仲事公子糾。及小白立為桓公，公子糾死，管仲囚焉。鮑叔遂進管仲。管仲既用，任政於齊，齊桓公以霸，九合諸侯，一匡天下，管仲之謀也。管仲曰：“吾始困時，嘗與鮑叔賈，分財利多自與，鮑叔不以為貪，知我貧也。吾嘗為鮑叔謀事而更窮困，鮑叔不以為愚，知時有利不利也。吾嘗三仕三見逐於君，鮑叔不以為不肖，知我不遭時也。吾嘗三戰三走，鮑叔不以為怯，知我有老母也。公子糾敗，召忽死之，吾幽囚受辱，鮑叔不以為無恥，知我不羞小恥而恥功名不顯於天下也。生我者父母，知我者鮑子也。”
88. Sima Qian 司馬遷. Records of the Grand Historian 《史記·齊太公世家》：桓公既得管仲，與鮑叔、隰朋、高傒修齊國政，連五家之兵，設輕重魚鹽之利，以贍貧窮，祿賢能，齊人皆說。
89. Sima Qian 司馬遷. Records of the Grand Historian 《史記·平準書》：齊桓公用管仲之謀，通輕重之權，徼山海之業，以朝諸侯，用區區之齊顯成霸名。
90. 《管子·五輔》：薄稅斂，毋苟於民，待以忠愛，而民可使親。
91. 《管子·大匡》：桓公踐位十九年，弛關市之徵，五十而取一，賦祿以粟，案田而稅，二歲而稅一，上年什取三，中年什取二，下年什取一，歲飢不稅。
92. 《管子·輕重戊》：桓公問於管子曰：“魯梁之於齊也，千谷也，蜂螫也，齒之有唇也。今吾欲下魯梁，何行而可？”管子對曰：“魯梁之民俗為緋，公服緋，令左右服之，民從而服之，公因令齊勿敢為，必仰於魯梁，則是魯梁釋其農事而作緋矣。”桓公曰：“諾。”即為服於泰山之陽，十日而服之。管子告魯梁之賈人曰：“子為我致緋千匹，賜子金三百斤，什至而金三千斤，則是魯梁不賦於民而財用足也。”魯梁之君聞之，則教其民為緋，十三月而管子令人之魯梁，魯梁郭中之民，道路揚塵，十灸不相見，繼纜而踵相隨，車轂翹騎，連伍而行。管子曰：“魯梁可下矣。”公曰：“奈何？”管子對曰：“公宜服帛，率民去緋閉關，毋與魯梁通使。”公曰：“諾。”後十月，管子令人之魯梁，魯梁之民，餓餒相及，應聲之正，無以給上。魯梁之君，即令其民去緋修農谷，不可以三月而得，魯梁之人，糴十百，齊糴十錢。二十四月，魯梁之民歸齊者十分之六，三年，魯梁之君請服。... 桓公問於管子曰：“萊菔與柴田相併，為之奈何？”管子對曰：“萊菔之山生柴，君其率白徒之卒，鑄庄山之金以為幣，重萊菔之柴賈。”萊菔之君聞之，告左右曰：“金幣者，人之所重也。柴者，吾國之奇出也。以吾國之奇出，盡齊之重寶，則齊可並也。”萊菔即釋其耕農而治柴，管子即令隰朋反農。二年，桓公止柴，萊菔之糴三百七十，齊糴十錢，萊菔之民降齊者十分之七，二十八月，萊菔之君請服。... 桓公問於管子曰：“楚者，山東之強國也，其人民習戰鬥之道，舉兵伐之，恐力不能過，兵弊於楚，功不成於周，為之奈何？”管子對曰：“即以戰鬥之道與之矣。”公曰：“何謂也？”管子對曰：“公貴買其鹿。”桓公即為百里之城，使人之楚買生鹿，楚生鹿當一而八萬，管子即令桓公與民通輕重，藏谷什之六，令左司馬伯公將白徒而鑄錢於庄山，令中大夫王邑載錢二千萬求生鹿於楚。楚王聞之，告其相曰：“彼金錢，人之所重也，國之所以存，明王之所以賞有功也。禽獸者，群害也，明王之所棄逐也，今齊以其重寶貴買吾群害，則是楚之福也，天且以齊私楚也，子告吾民，急求生鹿，以盡齊之寶”，楚民即釋其耕農而田鹿。管子告楚之賈人曰：“子為我致生鹿二十，賜子金百斤，什至而金千斤也，則是楚不賦於民而財用足也。”楚之男子居外，女子居塗，隰朋教民藏粟五倍。楚以生鹿藏錢五倍。管子曰：“楚可下矣。”公曰：“奈何？”管子對曰：“楚錢五倍，其君且自得，而修谷，錢五倍，是楚強也。”桓公曰：“諾。”因令人閉關不與楚通使，楚王果自得而修谷，谷不可三月而得也，楚糴四百，齊因令人載粟處芊之南，楚人降齊者十分之四，三年而楚服。... 桓公問於管子曰：“代國之出何有？”管子對曰：“代之出，狐白之皮，公其貴買之。”管子曰：“狐白應陰陽之變，六月而壹見，公貴買之，代人忘其難得，喜其貴買，必相率而求之，則是齊金錢不必出，代民必去其本而居山林之中；離枝聞之，必侵其北；離枝侵其北，代必歸於齊，公因令齊載金錢而往。”桓公曰：“諾。”即令中大夫王師北將人徒，載金錢，之代谷之上，求狐白之皮。代王聞之，即告其相曰：“代之所以弱於離枝者，以無金錢也；今齊乃以金錢求狐白之皮，是代之福也，子急令民求狐白之皮，以致齊之幣，寡人將以來離枝之民。”代人果去其本，處山林之中，求狐白之皮，二十四月而不得一；離枝聞之，則侵其北，代王聞大恐，則將其士卒葆於代谷之上。離枝遂侵其北，王即將其士卒願以下齊。齊未亡一錢幣，修使三年而代服。... 桓公問於管子曰：“吾欲制衡山之術，為之奈何？”管子對曰：“公其令人貴買衡山之械器而賣之，燕代必從公而買之，秦趙聞之，必與公爭之，衡山之械器，必倍其賈，天下爭之，衡山械器，必什倍以上。”公曰：“諾”。因令人之衡山求買械器，不敢辨其貴賈。齊修械器于衡山十月，燕代聞之，果令人之衡山求買械器。燕代修三月，秦國聞之，果令人之衡山求買械器。衡山之君告



- 其相曰：“天下爭吾械器，令其買再什以上”，衡山之民，釋其本而修械器之巧。齊即令隰朋漕粟於趙，趙糴十五，隰朋取之石五十，天下聞之，載粟而之齊；齊修械器十七月，修糴五月，即閉關不與衡山通使，燕代秦趙即引其使而歸；衡山械器盡，魯削衡山之南，齊削衡山之北，內自量無械器以應二敵，即奉國而歸齊
93. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 14.16 《論語·憲問》：子路曰：“桓公殺公子糾，召忽死之，管仲不死。”曰：“未仁乎！”子曰：“桓公九合諸侯，不以兵車，管仲之力也。如其仁，如其仁。”
94. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 14.17 《論語·憲問》：子貢曰：“管仲非仁者與？桓公殺公子糾，不能死，又相之。”子曰：“管仲相桓公，霸諸侯，一匡天下，民到於今受其賜。微管仲，吾其被髮左衽矣。豈若匹夫匹婦之為諒也，自經於溝瀆，而莫之知也？”
95. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 3.22 《論語·八佾》：子曰：“管仲之器小哉。”或曰：“管仲儉乎？”曰：“管氏有三歸，官事不攝，焉得儉？”“然則管仲知禮乎？”曰：“邦君樹塞門，管氏亦樹塞門。邦君為兩君之好，有反坫，管氏亦有反坫。管氏而知禮，孰不知禮？”
96. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·管晏列傳》：管仲世所謂賢臣，然孔子小之。
97. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 6.26 《論語·雍也》：宰我問曰：“仁者，雖告之曰，‘井有仁焉。’其從之也？”子曰：“何為其然也？君子可逝也，不可陷也；可欺也，不可罔也。”
98. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 13.27 《論語·子路》：子曰：“剛、毅、木、訥近仁。”
99. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 13.19 《論語·子路》：樊遲問仁。子曰：“居處恭，執事敬，與人忠；雖之夷狄，不可棄也。”
100. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.2 《論語·顏淵》：仲弓問仁。子曰：“出門如見大賓，使民如承大祭。己所不欲，勿施於人……”
101. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 6.30 《論語·雍也》：子貢曰：“如有博施於民而能濟眾，何如？可謂仁乎？”子曰：“…夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。能近取譬，可謂仁之方也已。”
102. Merriam-Webster dictionary. [Online] Available from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empathy>. [Accessed 2018, November 26].
103. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 12.11 《論語·顏淵》：齊景公問政於孔子。孔子對曰：“君君，臣臣，父父，子子。”公曰：“善哉！信如君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子，雖有粟，吾得而食諸？”
104. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 11.17 《論語·先進》：季氏富於周公，而求也為之聚斂而附益之。子曰：“非吾徒也，小子鳴鼓而攻之可也！”
105. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 7.12 《論語·述而》：子曰：“富而可求也，雖執鞭之士，吾亦為之。如不可求，從吾所好。”
106. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·伯夷列傳》：子曰“道不同不相為謀”，亦各從其志也。故曰“富貴如可求，雖執鞭之士，吾亦為之。如不可求，從吾所好”。(Comment: “富而可求也” in the previous note is quoted here as “富貴如可求” by Sima Qian, suggesting typos in passing, compiling or editing *The Analects of Confucius*. The “執鞭之士,” literally meaning “a man who holds a whip,” likely refers to a hostler, as Confucius was experienced in tending and managing horses as a charioteer.)
107. Singh, M. (2018). The cultural evolution of shamanism. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 41:e66.
108. 《晏子春秋·內篇·諫下第二》：公孫接、田開疆、古冶子事景公，以勇力搏虎聞。晏子過而趨，三子者不起。晏子入見公曰：“臣聞明君之蓄勇力之士也，上有君臣之義，下有長率之倫，內可以禁暴，外可以威敵，上利其功，下服其勇，故尊其位，重其祿。今君之蓄勇力之士也，上無君臣之義，下無長率之倫，內不以禁暴，外不可威敵，此危國之器也，不若去之。”公曰：“三子者，搏之恐不得，刺之恐不中也。”晏子曰：“此皆力攻勅敵之人也，無長幼之禮。”因請公使人少饋之二桃，曰：“三子何不計功而食桃？”公孫接仰天而歎曰：“晏子，智人也！夫使公之計吾功者，不受桃，是無勇也，士眾而桃寡，何不計功而食桃矣。接一搏獮而再搏乳虎，若接之功，可以食桃而無與人同矣。”援桃而起。田開疆曰：“吾仗兵而卻三軍者再，若開疆之功，亦可以食桃，而無與人同矣。”援桃而起。古冶子曰：“吾嘗從君濟於河，鼉銜左驂以入砥柱之流。當是時也，冶少不能遊，潛行逆流百步，順流九里，得鼉而殺之，左操驂尾，右擊鼉頭，鶴躍而出。津人皆曰：



- '河伯也！'若治視之，則大龜之首。若治之功，亦可以食桃而無與人同矣。二子何不反桃！”抽劍而起。公孫接、田開疆曰：“吾勇不子若，功不子逮，取桃不讓，是貪也；然而不死，無勇也。”皆反其桃，擊領而死。古冶子曰：“二子死之，治獨生之，不仁；恥人以言，而夸其聲，不義；恨乎所行，不死，無勇。雖然，二子同桃而節，治專其桃而宜。”亦反其桃，擊領而死。使者復曰：“已死矣。”公殮之以服，葬之以士禮焉。
109. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 19.6 《論語·子張》：子夏曰：“博學而篤志，切問而近思，仁在其中矣。”
110. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·孟嘗君列傳》：孟嘗君時相齊，封萬戶於薛。其食客三千人。
111. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·蘇秦列傳》：於是六國從合而并力焉。蘇秦為從約長，并相六國。
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113. Larson, M. S. (1977). *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
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116. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 9.1 《論語·子罕》：子罕言利與命與仁。
117. Mencius 孟子. 《孟子·梁惠王上》：“五畝之宅，樹之以桑，五十者，可以衣帛矣；雞豚狗彘之畜，無失其時，七十者，可以食肉矣。”
118. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 10.8 《論語·鄉黨》：食不厭精，膾不厭細。食饅而餲，魚餒而肉敗，不食。色惡，不食。臭惡，不食。失飪，不食。不時，不食。割不正，不食。不得其醬，不食。肉雖多，不使勝食氣。唯酒無量，不及亂。沽酒市脯不食。不撤姜食，不多食。
119. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 20.1 《論語·堯曰》：周有大賚，善人是富。“雖有周親，不如仁人；百姓有過，在予一人。”
120. Confucius 孔子. *The Analects of Confucius*, 17.24 《論語·陽貨》：子貢曰：“君子亦有惡乎？”子曰：“有惡。惡稱人之惡者，惡居下流而訕上者，惡勇而無禮者，惡果敢而窒者。”曰：“賜也亦有惡乎？”“惡微以為知者，惡不孫以為勇者，惡訐以為直者。”
121. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·卷六十八·商君列傳》：宗室非有軍功論，不得為屬籍。明尊卑爵秩等級，各以差次名田宅，臣妾衣服以家次。有功者顯榮，無功者雖富無所芬華。
122. Shang Yang 商鞅. 《商君書·墾令》：無得取庸，則大夫家長不建繕。愛子不惰食，惰民不窳，而庸民無所於食，是必農。
123. Shang Yang 商鞅. 《商君書·墾令》：均出餘子之使令，以世使之，又高其解舍，令有甬，官食概，不可以辟役。
124. Shang Yang 商鞅. 《商君書·墾令》：祿厚而稅多，食口眾者，敗農者也；則以其食口之數，賦而重使之，則辟淫游惰之民無所於食。
125. Shang Yang 商鞅. 《商君書·墾令》：無以外權任爵與官，則民不貴學問，又不賤農。
126. Shang Yang 商鞅. 《商君書·墾令》：國之大臣諸大夫，博聞、辯慧、游居之事，皆無得為；無得居游於百縣，則農民無所聞變見方。農民無所聞變見方，則知農無從離其故事，而愚農不知，不好學問。愚農不知，不好學問，則務疾農。知農不離其故事，則草必墾矣。
127. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·卷六十八·商君列傳》：事末利及怠而貧者，舉以為收斂。
128. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·秦始皇本紀》：二十八年，始皇東行郡縣，上鄒嶧山。立石，與魯諸儒生議，刻石頌秦德，議封禪望祭山川之事。
129. Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Records of the Grand Historian* 《史記·秦始皇本紀》：丞相李斯曰：“五帝不相復，三代不相襲，各以治，非其相反，時變異也。今陛下創大業，建萬世之功，固非愚儒所知，且越言乃三代之事，何足法也？異時諸侯並爭，厚招遊學。今天下已定，法令出一，百姓當家則力農工，士則學習法令辟禁。今諸生不師今而學古，以非當世，惑亂黔首。丞相臣斯昧死言：古者天下散亂，莫之能一，是以諸侯並作，語皆道古以害今，飾虛言以亂實，人善其所私學，以非上之所建立。今皇帝並有天下，別黑白而定一尊。私學而相與非法教，人聞令下，則各以其學議之，入則心非，出則巷議，誇主以為名，異取以為高，率群下以造謗。如此弗禁，則主勢降乎上，黨與成乎



下。禁之便。臣請史官非秦記皆燒之。非博士官所職，天下敢有藏《詩》、《書》、百家語者，悉詣守、尉雜燒之。有敢偶語《詩》《書》者棄市。以古非今者族。吏見知不舉者與同罪。令下三十日不燒，黥為城旦。所不去者，醫藥卜筮種樹之書。若欲有學法令，以吏為師。”制曰：“可。”

130. Sima Qian 司馬遷. Records of the Grand Historian 《史記·秦始皇本紀》：盧生說始皇曰：“臣等求芝奇葯仙者常弗遇，類物有害之者。方中，人主時為微行以辟惡鬼，惡鬼辟，真人至。人主所居而人臣知之，則害於神。真人者，入水不濡，入火不濡，陵雲氣，與天地久長。今上治天下，未能恬淡。願上所居宮毋令人知，然後不死之葯始可得也。”於是始皇曰：“吾慕真人，自謂‘真人’，不稱‘朕’。”乃令咸陽之旁二百里內宮觀二百七十復道甬道相連，帷帳鐘鼓美人充之，各案署不移徙。行所幸，有言其處者，罪死。始皇幸梁山宮，從山上見丞相車騎眾，弗善也。中人或告丞相，丞相後損車騎。始皇怒曰：“此中人泄吾語。”案問莫服。當是時，詔捕諸時在旁者，皆殺之。自是後莫知行之所在。聽事，群臣受決事，悉於咸陽宮。侯生、盧生相與謀曰：始皇為人，天性剛戾自用，起諸侯，並天下，意得欲從，以為自古莫及己。專任獄吏，

獄吏得親幸。博士雖七十人，特備員弗用。丞相諸大臣皆受成事，倚辨於上。上樂以刑殺為威，天下畏罪持祿，莫敢盡忠。上不聞過而日驕，下懼伏謾欺以取容。秦法，不得兼方，不驗，輒死。然候星氣者至三百人，皆良士，畏忌諱諛，不敢端言其過。天下之事無小大皆決於上，上至以衡石量書，日夜有呈，不中呈不得休息。貪於權勢至如此，未可為求仙藥。”於是乃亡去。始皇聞亡，乃大怒曰：“吾前收天下書不中用者盡去之。悉召文學方術士甚眾，欲以興太平，方士欲練以求奇葯。今聞韓眾去不報，徐市等費以巨萬計，終不得葯，徒奸利相告日聞。盧生等吾尊賜之甚厚，今乃誹謗我，以重吾不德也。諸生在咸陽者，吾使人廉問，或為詭言以亂黔首。”於是使御史悉案問諸生，諸生傳相告引，乃自除犯禁者四百六十餘人，皆坑之咸陽，使天下知之，以懲後。

131. Zhu Xi 朱熹.《四書章句集注》：脩，脯也。十脰為束。古者相見，必執贄以為禮，束脩其至薄者。蓋人之有生，同具此理，故聖人之於人，無不欲其入於善。但不知來學，則無往教之禮，故苟以禮來，則無不有以教之也。
132. Reischauer, E. O. (1965). The Dynastic Cycle. In J. Meskill (Ed.), *The Pattern of Chinese History*, pp. 31-33. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co.

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繁體中文文摘, 見下頁 Abstract in traditional Chinese on the next page



Defining *Junzi* and *Ren*: Confucius as the Father of Professionalism

定义“君子”和“仁”：孔子系专业精神之父

作者：徐罡

摘要：孔子(前 552 年-前 479 年)是中华文明的象征。尽管过去二千五百年里他产生了巨大的影响，他的许多想法至今仍然只被粗略定义。这使得它们在中国极易受到统治者利用和滥用、在世界范围极易招致国际社会误读和批评。“君子”和“仁”就属于这类含糊定义的概念；它们分别泛指道德完人极其善良的品格。在本文中，作者研究了孔子的早年经历，分析了他和源自神职人员巫师的社会群体“儒”的关系，并对与“君子”及“仁”有关的特征做了梳理，得出一个结论：孔子首先是个私人教育家和企业家。孔子生活在这样的一个时代：由于当时各种政治势力的竞争，形成了对政府管理方面的优质教育和培训的市场需求，同时也促成了普通平民向上流动的机会。他创办了一所私立学校，无论学生家庭背景如何，只要他们缴得起他的学费，他一律接收。在他的教学中，他开发完善了一套价值标准，相当于现代西方社会的“专业精神(或专业主义)”。他将原义为牺牲和殉道的“仁”，转换成一个专业品质的概念，拒绝了从政及文职人员的无谓牺牲。他理想中的完人暨君子，是行政管理的专业人士，与“专业”及“专业精神”的定义所设定的标准吻合。作为其价值体系支柱的“仁”，获得了新的含义，变成了替入式体会别人的感受及需求并作出相应回应的能力或行为，按当代术语，即英文的“empathy”，而 empathy 是专业行为的基石。遗憾的是，自秦国征服其它诸侯并于公元前 221 年创立中央集权的中华帝国之后，中国走上了一条不同于孔子应该期望的道路，专业与专业精神失去了向前进化的社会环境。时至今日，虽然专业精神作为一种社会规范在中国仍然几无重视且很少实践，但儒学确实给中国人赋予了追求专业生活的渴望和潜能，这点明显反映在美国的中国移民和他们的后代身上：他们中的很多人在美国释放了他们的潜力并活跃在专业领域。鉴于孔子一生追求专业精神，并且开创性地提出了专业精神的关键概念，孔子应该享有“专业精神之父”的地位。本文作者预测，专业精神作为孔子的真正遗产，将最终帮助中国走出其朝代循环，并为其和世界其它国家融合提供一个共同基础。

关键词：孔子, 儒学, 儒, 君子, 仁, 德, 道, 士, 专业精神, 专业, 专业人士, empathy, 自身利益

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摘要：孔子(前 552 年-前 479 年)是中華文明的象徵。儘管過去二千五百年里他產生了巨大的影響，他的許多想法至今仍然只被粗略定義。這使得它們在中國極易受到統治者利用和濫用、在世界範圍極易招致國際社會誤讀和批評。“君子”和“仁”就屬於這類含糊定義的概念；它們分別泛指道德完人極其善良的品格。在本文中，作者研究了孔子的早年經歷，分析了他和源自神職人員巫師的社會群體“儒”的關係，並對與“君子”及“仁”有關的特徵做了梳理，得出一個結論：孔子首先是個私人教育家和企業家。孔子生活在這樣的一個時代：由於當時各種政治勢力的競爭，形成了對政府管理方面的優質教育和培訓的市場需求，同時也促成了普通平民向上流動的機會。他創辦了一所私立學校，無論學生家庭背景如何，只要他們繳得起他的學費，他一律接收。在他的教學中，他開發完善了一套價值標準，相當於現代西方社會的“專業精神(或專業主義)”。他將原義為犧牲和殉道的“仁”，轉換成一個專業品質的概念，拒絕了從政及文職人員的無謂犧牲。他理想中的完人暨君子，是行政管理的專業人士，與“專業”及“專業精神”的定義所設定的標準吻合。作為其價值體系支柱的“仁”，獲得了新的含義，變成了替入式體會別人的感受及需求並作出相應回應的能力或行為，按當代術語，即英文的“empathy”，而 empathy 是專業行為的基石。遺憾的是，自秦國征服其它諸侯並於公元前 221 年創立中央集權的中華帝國之後，中國走上了一條不同於孔子應該期望的道路，專業與專業精神失去了向前進化的社會環境。時至今日，雖然專業精神作為一種社會規範在中國仍然幾無重視且很少實踐，但儒學確實給中國人賦予了追求專業生活的渴望和潛能，這點明顯反映在美國的中國移民和他們的後代身上：他們中的很多人在美國釋放了他們的潛力並活躍在專業領域。鑒於孔子一生追求專業精神，並且開創性地提出了專業精神的關鍵概念，孔子應該享有“專業精神之父”的地位。本文作者預測，專業精神作為孔子的真正遺產，將最終幫助中國走出其朝代循環，並為其和世界其它國家融合提供一個共同基礎。

關鍵詞：孔子, 儒學, 儒, 君子, 仁, 德, 道, 士, 專業精神, 專業, 專業人士, empathy, 自身利益