

Document 7.3

Excerpts from the *Analects of Confucius* (《论语》) on relationships within the family

Filial piety (xiao, 孝) lies at the heart of Confucianism. A son must obey and respect his father. As an adult, the son must honor him even after his death. It is the son's responsibility to offer sacrifices to his father's spirit. This tradition of ancestor worship by male descendants was deeply ingrained in Chinese culture before Confucius and continued for centuries. It explains, in part, why daughters were far less valued. They could not perform these ceremonial traditions.

2.6 You Zi (a disciple of Confucius) said, "It is rare for a man whose character is such that he is good as a son and obedient as a young man to [go against] his superiors; ... Being good as a son and obedient as a young man is perhaps the root of a man's character." [Lau]

2.6 When asked about being filial, Confucius replied, "The only time a dutiful son ever makes his parents worry is when he is sick." [Leys]

2.7 Nowadays people think they are dutiful sons when they feed their parents. Yet they also feed their dogs and horses. Unless there is respect, where is the difference? [Leys]

4.18 Confucius said, "In serving your father and mother you ought to dissuade them from doing wrong in the gentlest way. If you see your advice being ignored, you should not become disobedient but should remain [respectful]. You should not complain even if you are distressed." [Lau]

13.18 A governor of a region said to Confucius, "Among my people, there is a man of unbending integrity: when his father stole a sheep, he [gave evidence against] him." Confucius said, "Among my people, men of integrity do things differently; a father covers up for his son, a son covers up for his father—and there is integrity in what they do." [Leys]

CONFUCIANISM

2.16 Confucius said, "I will tell you what it is to know. To say you know when you know, and to say you do not when you do not, that is knowledge." [Lau]

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7.22 The Master said, "Even when walking in the company of two other men, I am bound to be able to learn from them. The good points of the one I copy; the bad points of the other I correct in myself." [Lau]

12.7 Zi Gong asked about government. The Master said, "Give them enough food, give them enough arms, and the common people will have trust in you."

Zi Gong said, "If one had to give up one of these three, which should one give up first? "Give up arms."

Zi Gong said, "If one had to give up one of the remaining two, which should one give up first?"

"Give up food. Death has always been with us since the beginning of time, but when there is no trust, the common people will not be able to stand on their feet."

[Lau]

CONFUCIANISM

12.19 Ji Kangzi asked Confucius about government, saying: "Suppose I were to kill the bad to help the good, how about that?" Confucius replied: "You are here to govern; what need is there to kill? If you desire what is good, the people will be good. The moral power of the gentleman is wind, the moral power of the common man is grass. Under the wind, the grass will bend." [Leys]

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Part 2: Excerpt from "Six Examples of Having It Backwards" by Han Feizi

Criminals are careful if they are likely to be discovered and stop if they are likely to be executed. But they are reckless if they will not be discovered and carry out their plans if they will not be punished. If goods of little value are left in a deserted place, even Zeng and Shi could be tempted. But if a hundred pieces of gold are hung up in the marketplace, even great robbers will not take them. . . . When sure to be discovered, then even great robbers do not take the gold hung in the marketplace. Therefore the enlightened ruler, in ruling his country, increases the guards and makes the penalties heavier; he depends on laws and prohibitions to control the people, not on their sense of decency. A mother loves her son twice as much as a father does, but a father's orders are ten times more effective than a mother's. The relationship between officials and the people is not based on love and their orders are ten thousand times more effective than parents'. Parents pile up love, but their orders fail; officials are strict and the people obey. Such is the basis for choosing between severity and love.

LEGALISM

Part 3: Excerpt from "Eminence in Learning" by Han Feizi

Nowadays, those who do not understand how to govern . . . say, "You must win the hearts of the people!" If you could assure good government merely by winning the hearts of the people, then there would be no need for [wise ministers] like Yi Yin and Guan Zhong—you could simply listen to what the people say. The reason you cannot rely on the wisdom of the people is that they have the minds of little children. If the child's head is not shaved, its sores will spread; and if its boil is not lanced, it will become sicker than ever. But when it is having its head shaved or its boil lanced, someone must hold it while the loving mother performs the operation, and it yells and screams incessantly, for it does not understand that the little pain it suffers now will bring great benefit later.

Now, the ruler presses the people to till the land and open up new pastures so as to increase their means of livelihood, and yet they consider them harsh; he draws up a penal code and makes the punishments more severe in order to put a stop to evil, and yet the people consider him stern. He levies taxes in cash and in grain in order to fill the coffers and granaries so that there will be food for the starving and funds for the army, and yet the people consider him greedy. He makes certain that everyone within his borders understands warfare and sees to it that there are no private exemptions from military service; he unites the strength of the state and fights fiercely in order to take its enemies captive, and yet the people consider him violent. These four types of undertaking all ensure order and safety to the state, and yet the people do not have sense enough to rejoice in them.

Legalism

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Document 8.1

Excerpts from *Daodejing* (《道德经》) on Dao, written around the 4th century B.C.E.

DAOISM

Legend has it that when Laozi (老子) left Luoyang, he traveled west. As he went through a mountain pass, a border guard recognized and stopped him. Fearing that Laozi's wisdom would be lost, he asked the sage to write down his thoughts. The result was *Daodejing*, a little book of just eighty-one very brief chapters. Although tradition has it that Laozi wrote the book, most scholars believe it is a collection of writings by several people. The poems have been discussed and debated for centuries. No other Chinese book has been translated as many times as *Daodejing*.

The Chinese language differs in many ways from European languages (see Lesson 5). A character may be used as a noun or verb, sometimes in the same sentence. The characters may have multiple shades of meaning. *Daodejing* is very poetic and quite abstract. It has been interpreted and translated in many ways.

Chapter 34

The way is broad, reaching left as well as right.
The myriad creatures depend on it for life yet it claims no authority.
It accomplishes its task yet lays claim to no merit.
It clothes and feeds the myriad creatures yet lays no claim to being their master.
For ever free of desire, it can be called small; yet, as it lays no claim to being master when the myriad creatures turn to it, it can be called great.
It is because it never attempts itself to be great that it succeeds in becoming great.

Chapter 43

The most submissive thing in the world can ride roughshod over the hardest in the world—that which is without substance entering that which has no crevices.
That is why I know the benefit of resorting to no action. The teaching that uses no words, the benefit of resorting to no action, these are beyond the understanding of all but a very few in the world.

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