

# Confucianism

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# Founder and Founding Story

The founder of Confucianism was a man named Kong Qi. In the West, he is called Confucius. He was born in 551 B.C. in northeastern China in the state of Lu.

Confucius shifted China's principal philosophies away from the focus on divine and the after life, focusing instead on the importance of daily life and human interactions.



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## Doctrine



Confucianism believes in ancestor worship and human-centered virtues for living a peaceful life. The golden rule of Confucianism is “Do not do unto others what you would not want others to do unto you.”

Confucianism, much like Buddhism, is debated over whether it is an actual religion or just a philosophy. Confucianism is best understood as an ethical guide to life and living with strong character. Yet, Confucianism also began as a revival of an earlier religious tradition. There are no Confucian gods, and Confucius himself is worshipped as a spirit rather than a god.

Confucius believed in the importance of education in order to create this virtuous moral character of respect, altruism, and humility.



## Holy Books

Great Learning- by Confucius	Doctrine of the Mean	Analects(Lunyu)	Mencius
<p>What the great learning teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to <b>renovate the people</b>; and to rest in the highest excellence.</p>	<p>The Confucian doctrine of the Mean teaches that <b>too much is as bad as too little</b>. The Aristotelian doctrine of the Mean says that there can be too much or too little of nearly every human passion and action.</p>	<p>This is the most common book of Confucianism. It is a collection of aphorisms and historical anecdotes embodying the basic values of the Confucian tradition: <b>learning, morality, ritual decorum, and filial piety</b>.</p>	<p>Mencius was a Chinese Confucian philosopher who is “second to Confucius himself.” He further developed Confucius' ideology. Mencius's views was his list of four dispositions, <b>benevolence (rén), righteousness (yì), wisdom (zhì), and propriety (lǐ)</b>.</p>

## Major Holidays/Festivals

Confucius' Birthday: 25th day of the eighth lunar month, festivals are held to celebrate the birth of Confucius all across China

Chongmyo Taeje: Confucian memorial ceremony at Jongmyo Shrine in Seoul. Held on the first Sunday in May to honor the rulers of the Joseon Dynasty

Ching-Ming: first day of the fifth solar term, during which, Chinese families clean the ancestors gravesites, pray, and make ritual offerings.





# Divisions

1. **Mencius**- human nature is inherently good
2. **Xunzi**- human nature is inherently evil
3. **Dong Zhongshu**- neutral stance on human nature, stating only that a person's actions have consequences in the universe.
4. **Song** - preached living a life of self-cultivation and balance between humanity and the cosmos.
5. **Ming** - focused on uniting a person's mind with his actions and how they related to the earth instead of the heavens.
6. **Korean** - how a person enters into a relationship with himself and others using Mencius' concepts of emotions and feelings
7. **Qing** - associated with politics instead of remaining a spiritual and philosophical school of thought.
8. **Modern Confucianism**- embraced democracy and science. In modern Confucian China, working together as a collective unit was favored over individual effort.

\*divisions are mostly formed by individual dynasties and named accordingly\*



## World Today

Traditionally, cultures and countries in the East Asian cultural sphere are strongly influenced by Confucianism, including China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, as well as Singapore and Myanmar's Kokang. Many of these countries still practice Confucianism, especially China, where it remains one of the most influential philosophies.

# Role of Women



Confucianism holds that women must be chaste and maintain a pleasant demeanor and be domestic. Because Confucius believed society was supposed to be centered around a patriarchy, it was a woman's duty to support her husband.

Confucianism placed conservative rules on women with “Three Obediences” which are three following precepts: women should be obedient to father before marriage, to husband after marriage and to son after the death of husband.





## Symbols



There are three main symbols that represent Confucianism. These three symbols include yin and yang, water, and Confucius.

Yin-yang refers to a concept originating in ancient Chinese philosophy where opposite forces are seen as interconnected and counterbalancing.

The Water Symbol represents the “source of life” in the Chinese philosophy.

The symbol for Confucius represents the man who began the religion, as he is one of, if not the most important person to come from this religion.