Confucianism I
Two systems of transliterating Chinese have emerged:

- The classic, Wade-Giles attempted to match Chinese characters to English characters as closely as possible.
- The modern Pinyin attempts to spell the Chinese words more phonetically.

In class, mostly we’ll be using Pinyin, as does Koller in our primary text but the supplemental Sourcebook uses the older Wade-Giles.

### Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wade- Giles</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kong Fu-Tzu</td>
<td>Kong Fuzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jen</td>
<td>Ren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao</td>
<td>Dao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chun Tzu</td>
<td>Junzi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"In summary, then, the hallmarks of the original Confucians were a reliance on ancient models, a concern for the golden mean between externalism and internalism, a stress on filial piety, and a deep respect for the ruler's connection with heaven. These socially oriented thinkers emphasized breeding, grace and public service. Their goal was harmony and balance through a hierarchical social order. They gave little attention to the rights of peasants or women, but they did prize ethical integrity, compassion, and learning. Against the blood and violence of their times, they called for a rule through moral force. This was their permanent legacy: Humanity is fidelity to virtue."

Ways to the Center, Denise Carmody & John Carmody, Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1989
The Warring States Period takes place from sometime in the 5th century BCE to the unification of China by Qin in 221 BCE. The Warring States Period was a period when regional warlords annexed smaller states around them and consolidated their rule. The process began in the Spring and Autumn Period, and by the 3rd century BC, seven major states had risen to prominence. These Seven Warring States, were the Qi, the Chu, the Yan, the Han, the Zhao, the Wei and the Qin.

China was in a period of enormous turmoil and incredible violence - the method of civil change was often conquest with wholesale murder of the conquered victims. This period has been called the Period of Warring States but it has also been called the Period of a Hundred Philosophers. “Feudal warfare, ravaging armies, brutal conquest, shifting boundaries, ruined crops and villages – such was the general picture.”

(Awakening, Bresnan)
Traditionally, it is held that Confucius (Latinized version of Kung Fuzi/Kung Fu-tzu) lived from around 551 BCE to 479 BCE (compare to Buddha 563-484BCE and Laozi 604-520BCE). He began his working life as a lowly administrator in the Court of Lu. After the death of his mother, he retired for the mandatory 1 year mourning period, resigning this job. After this period, at the age of 22 he opened up his own school (much like Plato’s Academy). When the nobles of the Court of Lu sent their own sons to study with him he gained a measure of fame. He wanted to be a successful administrator in public office (of the Zhou Civilization in the Shantung Province). Instead he became known as the "First Teacher" of China.
The Literary Core of Confucianism

- The “Five Classics” – the sources of inspiration for Confucius:
  - Classic of Poetry (Shijing)
  - Classic of History (Shujing)
  - Classic of Changes (Yijing)
  - Classic of Rites (Liji)

- The “Four Books” – later development of Confucian ideas:
  - Analects (Lunyu)
  - The Great Learning (Daxue)
  - Doctrine of the Mean (Zhongyong)
  - Book of Mengzi
• 1. Ancestral Worship
• 2. The Importance of the Family
• 3. The Practical Needs of an Agricultural Economy
• 4. The Regulation of Human Relationships

Four Key Elements of Confucianism
• **Why it is important:**
  
  a. knowing and honoring one's ancestors provides a grounding - a sense of identity and stability
  
  b. it unifies the extended family - and relatedly (pun intended) the entire society
  
  c. the ancestors are regarded as assets – their compiled wisdom representing the best way to go about one's business. This collective wisdom authorizes the revolution Confucius proposes under the guise of a reformation back to "traditional values" - These are the values of our ancestors - hence the whole society recognizes a common link to the past.

• Photo: Confucius’ Family Cemetery in Qufu, China

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**Ancestral Worship**
• **Why Families Are Important:**
  
  • **economic value** - everyone gets financially supported - there are no throw-away generations (one nurtures the young and cherishes the elderly)
  
  • **political/social** - the family is a model for all of society - it is the way discipline is maintained in a hierarchical fashion - one is well behaved as a son (obedient to the father) will become well behaved as an adult (obedient to the government)
  
  • **moral/psychological** - by providing clear ground rules - one understands the need for knowing one's place and performing one's function - the rules are known because morality is taught in the family - hence one feels confident and secure.

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**The Importance of the Family**
The Importance of the Family – Family Dynamics

provide wisdom and guidance <= the elderly <= provide financial support and respect

=> the parents =>
provide respect, obedience & service <= the children <= provide financial support, guidance and discipline
Confucius reasoned that without agricultural needs being placed at a very high priority, the country would not get fed and chaos would ensue - grain must be planted, harvested, stored and properly distributed - and this requires a harmonious and well ordered society - but one could not have that society unless people got fed - they are interdependent conditions.

Practical Needs of an Agricultural Economy
The Regulation of Human Relationships: Confucian Ethics

- Critical element essential to the maintenance of social/communal harmony and peace. Human relationships must be governed by virtue and by clear hierarchies - one must know one's place, want to fulfill their obligation to their family and to their society and act in such a way that is consistent with the classic values.
• “Do not do to others what you do not want done to you”  
  (Analects/Lun-Yu, Book VII, 22)
Confucianism is a humanistic social philosophy.

- This means it focuses on human beings and their social structures
- It also means that the ideal practices of a human social unit provide the foundation for human values (as opposed to a natural or supernatural foundation)

Confucianism is a role ethic: focusing on the rules & principles governing the role one plays in society and the role models one may find in wise leadership.

Confucianism is also a virtue ethic: defining and developing those qualities of individuals and of governors necessary to social reformation.

Confucian Ethics
• Core Ethical Concepts
  • Ren
  • Li
  • Xiao
  • Yi

(http://www.jmu.edu/madisonart/skyline/floatingworld/wm_library/Virtues.jpg)
• **The supreme ethical virtue**
  • Also translated as goodness, or benevolence – to love others.
  • more important to achieve Ren than to live
  • governs interpersonal feelings
  • Without Ren, all the other virtues are meaningless - it is the intention & motivation behind one's every action

Ren: Human-Heartedness
From *Lun-Yu/The Analects:*

- “Of neighborhoods benevolence is the most beautiful. How can the man be considered wise who, when he has the choice does not settle in benevolence?” (Book IV, 1)
- “If a man sets his heart on benevolence, he will be free from evil.” (Book IV, 4)
- “Is benevolence really far away? No sooner do I desire it than it is here.” (Book VII, 30)
Confucius' social philosophy largely revolves around the concept of ren, “compassion” or “loving others.” Cultivating or practicing such concern for others involved deprecating oneself. This meant being sure to avoid artful speech or an ingratiating manner that would create a false impression and lead to self-aggrandizement. (Lunyu 1.3) Those who have cultivated ren are, on the contrary, “simple in manner and slow of speech.” (Lunyu 13.27). For Confucius, such concern for others is demonstrated through the practice of forms of the Golden Rule: “What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others;” “Since you yourself desire standing then help others achieve it, since you yourself desire success then help others attain it.” (Lunyu 12.2, 6.30).

(Ren: Human-Heartedness)
• ritual, moral norms, duty to family and to society - there are 4 parts:
  • 1) **the rectification of names** (*Zheng Ming*) - this involves both the idea of certain tasks associated with certain titles - "the son should be a son and the father a father" (from the Analects) as well as a sense that correct speech is important in the good society - eg p.c. speech - as it directs/controls behavior and thought.
  • 2) **the doctrine of the mean** - this is the prescriptions to avoid all excesses in one's behavior - e.g. no excessive pridefulness nor false humility.
  • 3) **the 5 constant relationships** - these rules govern the relationships and duties between all the members of society – ruler & subject/husband & wife/parents & children/elder brother & younger brother/friend & friend - no member of society is exempt from culpability,
  • 4) **the regard for age** - as noted above the elderly are regarded as assets - it is very dishonorable to have one's elderly bearing burdens past their proper working years. These rules governed one's obligations towards one's parents and grandparents.

• **"appropriate manner of overt behavior needed to express one's inner thoughts or intentions."** (Bahm, 1992, p. 39)
Greetings in China

- Greeting gesture. In China, it is rude to call someone by their first name unless you've known them since childhood. In work-related situations, people address each other by their title; in social situations, "Mr.," "Mrs.," and "Miss" are used; at home, people often refer to each other by nicknames or terms of kinship. Remember, in China, the family name is first.
- Terms of kinship are often used for close non-relatives. A younger man often calls a man who is five years older than him "big brother" and someone who is considerably older "uncle." Chinese often address their friends as juniors and seniors even if they are just a few months younger or older. When a Chinese person asks someone their age, they often do this so they know how to address the person.
- Chinese sometimes don't smile or exchange greetings with strangers. Smiling or being friendly to someone you don't know well is sometimes considered rude and too familiar.
- When saying goodbye, it is considered appropriate to give a quick bow or nod to everyone present and go. Beijingers often say goodbye to one another by saying "Ju-i," which is translated both as "Take it slow" and "as one desires." The Chinese are not big on drawn-out goodbyes. After finishing a meal, they often get up, thank each other, say goodbye and leave abruptly. When the Chinese say farewell after a visit or journey together, they simply go; there is "no lingering, no swapping of addresses, no reminiscences, nothing sentimental."

Bowing, Touching, Clapping and Shaking Hands in China

- Unlike Japanese, Chinese do not necessarily bow to one another as a greeting, a parting gesture or an alternative to waving or saying "Hi." But they sometimes do. Bowing is generally reserved as a sign of respect for elders and ancestors, especially on special holidays. When Chinese bow, they make a fist with their right hand and hold it in the palm of the left at stomach level and bow slightly to deeply depending on how much respect they want to convey.
- In imperial times, visitors to the emperor were expected to drop to the floor and knock their foreheads on the floor nine times to show respect. Such kowtowing gestures are still displayed when Chinese worship at temples. Kowtowing is a powerful gesture reserved mainly for honoring the dead or offering deep respect at a temple. In the Cultural Revolution as a tool of humiliation against those who committed political crimes.
- The Chinese have traditionally not been big hand shakers but the custom is now widely practiced among men, especially when greeting Westerners and other foreigners. Sometimes Chinese shake for too long for Western tastes and have a limp rather than firm grip. A limp handshake is regarded as a gesture of humility and respect. When a Western man meets a Chinese person, especially a woman, he should wait for the other person to offer his or her hand first, before offering to shake hands.
- With Chinese, avoid hugs, backslapping or touching other than a handshake. Sometimes when entering a school, a meeting or a banquet, Chinese clap as a greeting. It is customary to clap in return. A soft clap, with your hands horizontal to the floor is best. Introductions are usually made with a third party. It is considered unusual for a person to walk up to a stranger and introduce himself.

protocolprofessionals.com Photo: President Obama bowing to Hu Jin Tao in 2011
Xiao: Filiality

• Filial Piety – see importance of the family & Respect for Age – If one can be dutiful and respectful as a child in the family then one will be dutiful and respectful as an adult towards everyone (esp. the government. Love in the family gets translated to love within all society. This is the root of our honor.
• The Yi dance shown here is a procession of music and dance in memory of the great sage Confucius. The dance is usually performed only on the anniversary of Confucius’ birth (September 28th), however it is occasionally performed on other important secular occasions.

• Yi connotes a moral sense: the ability to recognize what is right and good; the ability to feel, under the circumstances what is the right thing to do. It is a kind of moral intuition.

• Some actions ought to be performed for the sole reason that they are right—regardless of what they produce; not for the sake of something else. Yi is the intent to do the right thing no matter what…

• Associated with ideals of justice, duty & equity

• Yi, according to Ames & Rosement, is doing what is appropriate with one’s virtue. Yi is putting li into practice your own way. Yi is one’s own unique disposition to act according to li. One makes one’s own meaning and personal identity. Meaning is fusion of external li and internal yi. Yi is acting appropriately in one’s own situation.

(http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/syllabi/g/gier/308/308terms.htm)
“When you meet someone better than yourself, turn your thoughts to becoming his equal. When you meet someone not as good as you are, look within and examine your own self.”

(Lun-Yu, Book IV, 17)
“Guide them by edicts, keep them in line with punishments, and the common people will stay out of trouble but will have no sense of shame. Guide them by virtue, keep them in line with the rites, and they will, besides having a sense of shame, reform themselves.” (Lun-Yu, Book II, 3)

The Chinese civil service was founded on Confucian philosophy, and part of that philosophy was the meritocratic idea that anyone could become a good person through the proper philosophical training: ‘By nature men are similar, by practice men are wide apart’, as Confucius put it. (http://www.politicsofwellbeing.com/2011_07_01_archive.html)
A hallmark of Confucius' thought is his emphasis on education and study. He disparages those who have faith in natural understanding or intuition and argues that the only real understanding of a subject comes from long and careful study. Study, for Confucius, means finding a good teacher and imitating his words and deeds. A good teacher is someone older who is familiar with the ways of the past and the practices of the ancients. (See Lunyu 7.22)

While he sometimes warns against excessive reflection and meditation, Confucius' position appears to be a middle course between studying and reflecting on what one has learned. “He who learns but does not think is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.” (Lunyu 2.15)

(https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucius/#ConEdu)