

## Confucius (551-479B.C.) and His Philosophy on Education, Society and Politics

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**Abstract:** Confucius was a philosopher of contemplative and farsighted thought. His outstanding contribution is obviously marked in the history of human thought and civilization. Confucius emphasized on the moral values to establish a disciplined and stable society while there was prevailing a chaotic condition in social and political life of China. He thought that customs, traditions and formalities are the most significant factors in establishing discipline and good governance in a society and he disclosed the concept of a ruler with principles, efficiency, honesty and justice. It is Confucius who introduced the concept of a moral state and a disciplined society. Confucianism had appeared as the most influential doctrine or ideal in the history of Chinese life before the very beginning of Christian era. The doctrine apparently influenced the Chinese thought and ideals including education, society, administration, governance and behavior of individuals. Since ancient period, Confucian ideology has been playing a very profound and significant role on personal life, social organizations, government and administration in China and other Confucian states. This article aims to explore and to review Confucius and His philosophy.

**Key words:** Confucius, wisdom, virtue, justice, ruler, and superior man

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### INTRODUCTION

Confucius (551-479 B.C.), according to Chinese tradition, was a thinker, political figure, educator, teacher and founder of the Ru School of Chinese thought. His teachings form the foundation of much of subsequent Chinese speculation on the education and comportment of the ideal man. Fung Yu-lan, one of the great 20th century authors on the history of Chinese thought, compares Confucius's influence in Chinese history with that of Socrates in the West. The philosophy and thought of Confucius is known as Confucianism. Confucius's philosophy and thought is directly influenced by Mancius (372-289 B.C.) Hsun Tzu (300-237 B.C.) and others of his time. *Analects of Confucius* is considered the most authentic and reliable composition of Confucius in which the reflection of his utmost thought and philosophy is evident. Needless to say, Confucius is the spiritual ancestor of later teachers, historians, moral philosophers, literary scholars and countless others whose lives and works figure prominently in Chinese intellectual history.

Confucius was born in 551 B.C. to the Kung family in the state of Lu, in today's Shantung province in China. Confucius (551-479 B.C.) was a sage of ancient China and its greatest philosopher. He appears as the most

outstanding personality and the most accomplished figure in the course of China's long history. He is revered among the Chinese as their supreme, Sage and Foremost Teacher in China. A very few civilizations of the world can cite a comparable historical figure<sup>[1]</sup>.

We do not know how Confucius himself was educated, but tradition has it that he studied ritual with the Daoist Master Lao Dan, music with Chang Hong and the lute with Music-master Xiang. In his middle age Confucius is supposed to have gathered about him a group of disciples whom he taught and also to have devoted himself to political matter in Lu. The numbers of Confucius's disciples have been greatly exaggerated, with Sima Qian and other sources claiming that there were as many as three thousand of them. Sima Qian goes on to say that, Those who, in their own person, became conversant with the six Disciplines [taught by Confucius], numbered seventy-two. The 4th century BCE Mencius and some other early works give there number as seventy.

The most reliable work on the life and teaching of Confucius is *Analects of Confucius*, a volume consisting of notes and journals on consisting of notes and journals on Confucius's sayings and activities kept by the disciples and put together after the master's death. Confucius is said to have written the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and to have edited the *classic of poetry*, the

*classic of history*, the *classic of changes* and the *classic of ceremonials*. This group of ancient texts is known as the Five Classics. During the Sung dynasty (960-1279) Confucian scholars brought together the Analects, the Mencius, the Great Learning, attributed to Tseng Shen, a disciple of Confucius and the Chung Yung or the Doctrine of the Mean, attributed to Tzu Ssu, the grandson of Confucius. They named the Collection the Four Books. The Four Books and Five Classics are the Confucian texts and have for centuries served as the syllabus for education in China—the Four Books at the primary level and the Five Classics at the secondary level.

**Confucius's philosophy of education:** Confucius is considered as the foremost teacher of China, because he had a deep conviction in the native integrity and dignity as well as the equality and educability of all men. He kept an open-door school and young men were admitted on the sole consideration of their eagerness to learn. He saw abundant potential in each of the students. In each man, Confucius tried to seek to develop the total man. His method of instruction was personal and informal. He successfully propounded his own method of education for the sake of greater welfare of mankind. His method of education or teaching has achieved an enduring value in the arena of knowledge and wisdom. The tremendous influence that Confucius has exercised is due to his personality as much as to his teaching; Confucius was the first private teacher in China. And he might be said to be the founding father of a new class in Chinese society.

A hallmark of Confucius's 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. While he sometimes warns against excessive reflection and meditation, Confucius's position appears to be a middle course between studying and reflecting on what one has learned. Confucius himself is credited by the tradition with having taught altogether three thousand students, though only seventy are said to have truly mastered the arts he cherished. He is willing to teach anyone, whatever their social standing, as long as they are eager and tireless. He taught his students morality, proper speech, government and the refined arts. He also emphasizes the Six Arts *ritual music archery, chariot-riding, calligraphy and computation*. It is clearly evident that he regards morality the most important subject. His pedagogical methods are striking. He never discourses at

length on a subject. Instead he poses questions, cites passages from the classics, or uses apt analogies and waits for his students to arrive at the only right answers. I only instruct the eager and enlighten the fervent. If I hold up one corner and a student cannot come back to me with the other three, I do not go on with the lesson. Confucius's goal is to create gentlemen who carry themselves with grace, speak correctly and demonstrate integrity in all respect. His strong dislike of the sycophantic 'petty men; whose clever talk and pretentious manner win them an audience. Actions and behaviour no longer correspond to the labels originally attached to them. Moral education is important to Confucius because it is the means by which one can rectify this situation and restore meaning to language and values to society. He believes that the most important lessons for obtaining such a moral education are to be found in the canonical *Book of Songs*, because many of its poems are both beautiful and good.

The tremendous influence that Confucius has exercised is due to his personality as much as to his teaching. He wanted to be a statesman, but he had to be content with being a teacher for most of his life. Down to the time of Confucius, education had been the special privilege of the nobility and instructors were government officials. Confucius was the first private teacher in China. He was first to engage in teaching as a means of reform as well as livelihood. He might be said to be the founding teacher of a new class in Chinese society, namely the powerful class of scholars, which eventually replaced the imperial court and aristocracy as the seat of the cultural authority of the nation.

Confucius is revered as the Foremost Teacher of China, because basically he had a deep conviction in the native integrity and dignity as well as the quality and educability of all men. The well-known Confucian saying, In education there are no class distinctions. He kept an open-door school and young man was admitted on the sole consideration of their eagerness to learn. He saw abundant potential in each of the students and in each he sought to develop the total man. The objective was to help each student to develop his virtue and talent to the full and to provide society and government with leaders. Confucius's method of instruction was personal and informal. Conversation with individual students or small groups seemed to be the favorite practice. Confucius readily won the affection and respect of his students. An inner circle of disciples stood by him through good and bad fortune. Evidently tuition was collected from each student according to his financial circumstance. Confucius' class standpoint on the question of education was most clear. He would on no account break down the

class barriers and was by no means a teacher of the 'whole people'. According to Confucius, people of the lower class can only be directed to do things and much not be allowed to have knowledge. He embellished this with such remarks: Slaves are mean and lowly because they obstinately refuse to learn. He also especially looked down on women; the same as he did slaves-difficult to handle and keep and not to be treated with familiarity. They belonged in the category of people who were not worth educating. But all reactionary ruling classes in history considered it necessary for the enslavement to gain a modicum of general technical knowledge for the purpose of making them more effective in carrying on agricultural and handicrafts work, performing various services and producing more material wealth for the enjoyment of their oppressors. Confucius said that slaves can at most be allowed a little technical knowledge, but they must not be allowed to have profound education. In Confucius' eyes, the so-called 'sages' and 'men of virtue' stood at the opposite pole from the slaves. The former were born gifted, needing no education, while the latter were born stupid, had no money for the tuition and were therefore not worth teaching. Confucius concluded that the middle social stratum must be educated. It was therefore clear that most of his pupils were in this stratum. At the same time, they could afford the tuition fee of good, cured meat. The slaves certainly could not. The subjects that Confucius taught were said to be arranged in four causes: i) *principles and practice of virtue* ii) *speech*; iii) *administrative affairs* and iv) *literature*. It was also said that Confucius educated his pupils in four things: letters, deportment, loyalty and fidelity. But no matter what his courses were called, Confucius' one aim in running the school was to cultivate people who would serve the politics of the slave-owning class. He placed principles and practice of virtue first in the curriculum in order to test whether his pupils met the political standard and requirements of the slave-owning class. Knowledge and ability were relegated to second place.

Placing virtue first, Confucius crammed his pupils with reactionary ideas to bring their thinking into conformity with the political and moral standards laid down by the slave-owning class, every word and every deed in accordance with the rules of the slave system. What Confucius taught *poetry, history, rites and music*- also aimed at serving the politics of the slave owning class. For example, Confucius advocated extensive study of all learning and asked his pupils to study *The Book of Odes* and *The Book of Documents*. He maintained that from *The Book of Documents*-a record of the exploits of ancient emperors and kings and a compilation of decrees issued

by them-people could learn how to abide by the rules and not make trouble and, more-over, benefit by the experience of slave-owners in power through the ages and be adept at governing the state. As for the slaves themselves, who were not qualified to be his pupils, Confucius thought he should still exert a measure of ideological influence on them in society and gave them to understand that they ought to obey the slave-owners. With the aim of study being to become an official, of course there was no need to engage in productive labor or to have any contract at all with social reality. One needed only to learn from those so-called sages and ancient kings, those ruling slave-owners, to fill one's head with the experience of ruling over and exploiting the people, needed only to strive to fulfill the political and moral requirements stipulated by them. It was enough just to bury oneself in books and cultivate oneself behind closed doors.

Confucius' pupil Tseng Shen was probably the ablest in complying with this rigmarole spun by his teacher. He examined himself three times a day, pondering over his short-comings in solitude. Liu Shao-Chi's sister Self-cultivation and Lin Piao's advocacy of making revolution in the depths of one's Soul, though couched in different words, are in essence both wares from Confucius' shop. Though Confucius could not achieve remarkable success as a statesman or politician his outstanding contribution in education as a teacher is noteworthy. At the age of 22, he established a school. He provided proper teaching of morality, discipline and ideals for his disciples there. At the very outset, it was as like as orphanage. It became famous later and it created a great attraction of the students. He received remunerations and dues from the rich and aristocratic families. He also provided free studentship for the poor and meritorious pupils. Confucius is said to have about thousands of disciples of his own. (Confucius, 'Sage' of the Reactionary Classes.

By the end of the century, Chinese leaders did belatedly realize that they had to change. The educational system for instance, was still based on the traditional Confucius-curriculum students needed to pass the examinations. That left China without the industrially and scientifically trained elite it would need to meet the western challenge.

**Confucius's philosophy of society:** Confucius had his own moral ideas about the individual and society. In regard to society, he held that in order to have a well-ordered society, the most important thing is to carry out what he called the rectification of names. Things in actual fact should be made to accord with the implication of the

names attached to them. In other words, every name contains certain implications which represent the essence of that class of things of which this name applies. Such things, therefore, should agree with this ideal essence. Human-heartedness: In regard to the virtues of the individual, Confucius emphasized human-heartedness and righteousness. Righteousness means the Ought of a situation. It is a categorical imperative. Everyone in society has certain things which he ought to do and which must be done for their own sake. This is rather a formal idea, but that of human-heartedness is more concrete. The formal essence of the duties of man in society is their Oughtness, because all these duties are what he ought to do. But the material essence of these duties is loving others, i.e. or human-heartedness. The father acts according to the way a father should act who loves his son; the son acts according to the way a son should act who loves his father. Confucius said:

**Human-heartedness:** consists in loving others (The Confucian Analects, xii, 22). The man who really loves others will certainly be able to perform his duties in society. While Confucius developed these moral ideas Mencius gave them psychological and metaphysical justifications. Mencius had a famous theory which is that human nature is essentially good. Human-heartedness is not something alien to human nature but something inherent in it. According to him, all men have a mind which cannot bear to see the suffering of others. This he called the unbearing mind. The practice of human-heartedness by an individual is nothing more than the natural development of his unbearing mind. This is the psychological justification which Mencius gave to the Confucian virtue.

**Necessity of love and compassion:** Confucius' social philosophy largely revolves around the concept of compassion or loving others. Cultivating or practicing such concern for others involved deprecating oneself. This meant being sure or avoids artful speech or an ingratiating manner that would create a false impression and lead to self-aggrandizement. Those who have cultivated *ren* are, on the contrary, simple in manner and slow of speech. He regards devotion to parents and older siblings as the most basic form of promoting the interests of others before one's own and teaches that only those who have learned self-discipline can accomplish such altruism.

**Self-restraint:** Learning self-restraint involves studying and mastering *Li*, the ritual forms and rules of propriety through which one expresses respect for superiors and enacts his role in society in such a way that he himself is

worthy of respect and admiration. A concern for propriety should inform everything that one says and does. Look at nothing in defiance of ritual, listen to nothing in defiance of ritual, speak of nothing in defiance of ritual, never stir hand or foot in defiance of ritual.

**Confucius's humanism:** Because of this note of avoidance, Confucius has been marked as a skeptic or an agnostic by some and upheld as a thoroughgoing humanist by others. It is true that Confucius regarded much of formal religion as superstition and showed an eagerness to steer clear from the prevalent practices of witchcraft and appreciation for the genuine religious sentiment and spirit in life, just as he also found much aesthetic enjoyment in religious ritual.

**Five social relationships:** This sounds quite platonic, but Confucius's interest was much less in the logical and metaphysical aspects of this theory than in its moral aspect. What he emphasized is that every name in the social relationships implies certain responsibilities and duties. There are five social relationships: father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers and friends and friends. These are all names of social relationships and the individual bearing these names must fulfil his responsibilities and duties accordingly. If every individual in the society acts in this way, then the society will be in great peace. He felt the necessity of kindness, fraternity, compassion and co-operation among the individuals in the society. Confucius emphasizes on five kinds of social relationships among the individuals:

- Ruler ruled
- Father-son
- Elder younger
- Husband wife
- Friend friend

**Ruler ruled relationship:** It indicates the legal relationship. This law may be the order of a sovereign king or a modern constitution. This is to say that an individual in a society will abide by social laws and social institutions will establish the rights of the citizen.

**Father-son:** It is a social relationship. This relationship is of affection. Mutual affection and respect keeps the society free from indiscipline.

**Husband-wife:** It is a relationship of love. Love is very essential in a society. If every individual poses love the society will be peaceful. All discriminations and hatred will be removed from the society.

**Elder-younger:** In this context, younger will follow the elder. And the elders must have such qualities which will be followed by their Youngers.

**Friend friend:** This is obviously a mutual relationship. An individual in the society is a friend of other. This is also called companionship. Upon this basis, a society forms. An individual should be happy at the happiness of other and be distressed at the distress of other. This is the social life. These five basic relationships build a foundation of a society.

**Family:** Confucius gives a distinct illustration about family and its role on society. He argues that family is the basic unit or basic foundation of social life. Society cannot be formed without family. In family husband and wife are closely related or cemented to each other. Their relationship is inevitable and indispensable. Since a family is the basic unit of a society it is also the basic unit of a state. Confucius exclusively utters this in his social thought. Confucius also opines that as the heaven is the focal point of the universe, father is the focal point of a family.

**Village:** According to Confucius, the total development of a state obviously depends upon the total development of the villages. Rural development is the principal criterion of the whole development of a country. Every individual should show respect and honor to other. One must have compassion, kindness, sense of respect and civic sense in the village. Then every individual will lead a peaceful life in the society.

**Role of antiquity:** Confucius represented his teachings as lessons transmitted from antiquity. He claimed that he was a transmitter and not a maker and that all he did reflect his reliance on and love for the ancients. Such justifications for one's ideas may have already been conventional in Confucius' day. Certainly his claim that there were antique precedents for his ideology had a tremendous influence on subsequent thinkers many of whom imitated these gestures. But we should not regard the contents of the Analects as consisting of old ideas. Much of what Confucius taught appears to have been original to him and 10 have represented a radical departure from the ideas and practices of his day.

Thus, Confucianism became a religion. Though Confucius was an atheist, he believed in the existence of heaven. He is of the view that the universe is being regulated by a natural order. The earth is order. The earth is also being regulated by a natural order. So every individual of the world must follow the natural order of the

world. Basically he did not think of any formal religion but on the other hand he thought of the nature of the universe. Confucianism promotes an orderly life whereby a culture attempts to conform to an abstract mode of ethics, rooted in tradition. This involves each person finding their own role in society and being responsible and righteous in it, seeking harmony in everything whether large or small and conforming in every way by living in harmony with cosmic law and the orderliness of the social structure which in turn is patterned on the structure of nature.

**Confucius' s philosophy of government and politics:** Confucius was not a politician. But he thought for the individuals of the state. To the rulers Confucius's advice was, Find out the approaches for the greater welfare of the subjects and provide the essentials for them. According to Confucius, the state is a natural institution. This natural and normal institution can be changed by its individual's. He argues that the state is for individuals; individuals are not for the state. For the greater welfare and existence of the state Confucius suggests:

- The state must provide the essentials for the individuals and meet the economic needs of the people. The state must have sufficiency in food.
- The state must achieve military forces to uphold its supreme sovereignty and existence.
- The state must uphold the loyalty of the individuals to the government.

Although Confucius was not a statesman or a professional politician, his political ideology, ideals, philosophy could attract the Chinese people. His political thought had exceedingly been welcomed in China. His ideas on government and politics are as follows:

**The superior man (The Chun- tzu):** The superior man or The Chun-tzu exemplifies -The full development of the confusion virtues. Chun-tzu means literally the son of a prince and it signified just that at the time of Confucius. Confucius, however, shifted the meaning from nobleman to a man who conducted himself nobly. The new class of Chun-tzu might still be regarded as constituting an aristocracy, rather than one's birth. Here is another instance in which one finds Confucius teaching daringly new thoughts while he proclaims himself a transmitter and not an innovator that the renowned civil service examination system was developed in China<sup>[2]</sup>.

Confucius emphasizes on the necessity of the Philosopher-King concept for the state. He thought that a ruler of the state must be a philosopher. Without

being wise or learned, or without acquiring proper knowledge a ruler cannot rule his people and the state properly. This concept of ruling a state is similar to the concept of philosopher-king of Greek philosopher Plato. In this respect, the Platonic view of state is sharply similar to the Confucian thought. Confucius gives a distinguished clarification about law and order in the state. He is of the opinion that law and order must rule a state. But Confucius does not support or rules out the necessity of rigorous laws, rules and regulations in a state.

The superior man, according to Confucius is the man in whom inborn humanity is harmoniously blended with cultivated decorum. His life is internally directed and not externally controlled. The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear, because when he looks into himself, he finds no cause for self-reproach. Being humane he has no anxiety being wise he has no perplexities, being brave he has no fear. The superior man is distressed by his lack of ability, but not by his lack of fame. With a deep sense of confidence and serenity, the superior man is not easily affected by the fortunes of the day. But it does not mean that he may live a life of self, contentment, keeping aloof from the everyday concerns of society. In fact, like the Platonic philosopher, the Confucian superior man is destined to take responsibility in government. Since men are not actually equal either by birth or training, good government will prevail when the superior men lead and the others follow. It is on the basis of this broad Confucian assumption. The government of a state should enforce the law and orders upon the people in a minimum standard or dimension. Confucius says that the criminals should be accused of minor punishment. He opines that to rule a state, rigorous laws are not essential, but only moral values and voluntary services are the best approaches in keeping discipline in the society and the state.

**Morality and justice in a ruler:** During the time of Confucius, the rulers were corrupted, cruel, brutal and oppressors. The rulers were not just and they did not show any respect to the law and orders. Consequently, the then society and the state had to face a tremendous chaos and indiscipline. Confucius was really perturbed at this chaotic situation. To prevent this indiscipline, he expressed his notions about the morality of a ruler in ruling the country. That is why, Confucius emphasizes on kindness, justice, decorum, simplicity, compassions, morality and co-operation. These are the elements, which can help a ruler conduct the state.

**Individual and state:** Confucius's thoughts on government are grounded on his assumption of the inviolable sanctity of the individual. He believed that the commander at a great army may be carried off, but the will of a common man cannot be taken from him (Analects of Confucius, Chap. 9, Section 25). Governments are formed not for the comfort and enjoyment of the rulers, or even for the maintenance of law and order in the state, but for the happiness and enlightenment of the people. Thus government becomes inseparable from education and the state may be compared with a schoolhouse and the ruler with a schoolmaster. And the most effective type of instruction comes from the personal example on the part of the ruler.

For the proper conduct of government, the element of decorum should also be employed in support of the element of virtue or humanity. Confucius said, Lead the people by laws and regulate them by penalties and the people will try to keep out of jail but will have no sense of shame. Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the usage of decorum and the people will have a sense of shame and moreover will become good (Analects of Confucius, Chap. 2, Section 3). If a ruler loves decorum, righteousness and good faith, according to Confucius, the people will not permit themselves to be vulgar obstinate, or insincere, Confucius considered the restoration of the proper performance of social rites of public worship and festivals, which had fallen into neglect, as important to promoting social order. The same motivation made Confucius eager corrects the disparity between name or title and reality. This situation had come about because men in high place failed to fulfil their obligations, while underlings usurped the rights and prerogatives belonging to their superiors. Confucius said, in reply to a prince's question about government let the prince be prince, the minister be minister, the father father and the son son.

**Good governance:** It was most troubling to Confucius that the political institutions of his day had completely broken down. He attributed this collapse to the fact that those who wielded power as well as those who occupied subordinate positions did so by making claim to titles for which they were not worthy. About the principles of good government, Confucius says, Good government consists in the ruler being a ruler, the minister being a minister, the father being a father and the son being a son. Confucius's analysis of the lack of connection between actualities and their names and the need to correct such circumstances is usually referred to as Confucius's theory of zhengming.

**Pioneer of central government:** Confucius was the initiator of the central government. He did not believe in totalitarianism. Because, a totalitarian ruler is always engaged in keeping power with his own control. He does not bother for the greater welfare of the people. Confucius supports the system of monarchy. He comments that monarchy is the best system of ruling. But, on the other hand, he opines that if the rules or monarch is good and beneficent, monarchy is good, otherwise not.

**Influence of law:** Confucius's political philosophy is mainly rooted in the belief that a ruler should learn self-discipline, should govern his subjects by his own example and should treat them with love and concern. If the people are led by laws and uniformity among them be sought by punishments, they will try to escape punishment and have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue and uniformity sought among them through the practice of ritual propriety, they will possess a sense of shame and come to you of their own accord. Confucius warns about the ill consequence of promulgating law codes should not be interpreted as an attempt to prevent their adoption.

**Bureaucracy:** Confucius discloses his opinion about the bureaucracy of a state. According to Confucius to rule a state properly, an effective, stable and well-organized bureaucracy is essential. If the administrators and bureaucrats are not intellectual and efficient, people have to face a lot of problems. It creates indiscipline in the society. He advocates for a commission for all sorts of public appointments. Confucius argues that bureaucracy is such a system, which can lead a government to the proper approach in ruling the state. Confucius employs a systematic hierarchy in bureaucracy.

**War:** Confucius does not support war in his thought. But he does not hesitate to pay glowing tribute to the heroes and heroines who have sacrificed their valuable lives in wars and battles for their motherlands. Confucius opined that if war is necessary the ruler must arrange proper military training for the people. This training will not merely the military training, it will also be the training of moral responsibility, human values and civic sense.

**Imposition of taxes:** Confucius says that the state must fulfill the economic need of the people. The state has been created for providing the necessary economic facilities for the people. According to Confucius's view the state is a welfare institution. So the state should play the role in keeping the existence of other welfare institutions. In this respect, Confucius supports the imposition of taxes upon the citizens of the state. He is of the view that tax will be equal and universal for every citizen. Confucius

approves the income tax but opposes the imposition of duty.

**Personal ownership of property:** He supports the ownership of property in a state. He invokes for the balanced distribution and equal allocation of properties among the individuals. Confucius argues that an individual cannot claim the whole ownership of a particular property. He cannot occupy the property with his absolute possession. That is why, property must be distributed properly among the individuals in accordance with the necessity of society and state.

**Price of goods/commodities:** Confucius opposes the monopoly price-hike of goods. He asserts the control of the government upon the goods, provision of loans and other essential facilities for the people.

**Allowance:** He supports the allowance for the olds, disables and orphans.

A comparative study between thought and philosophy of Confucius and that of the philosophers after him is given as follows:

#### **SUPERIOR MAN/PHILOSOPHER KING**

**Confucius-socrates:** Confucius's view on knowledge, wisdom, justice and Socrates's (469-399B.C.) view are closely related to each other. There is an inseparable relationship and similarity between the two philosophers in terms of their viewpoints and opinions on knowledge and wisdom.

Confucius is of the opinion that a human individual must acquire knowledge to be good. Through knowledge and wisdom goodness and justice can be established in the Society. According to Confucius, a man becomes a superior man if he is virtuous. Virtue comes through knowledge, wisdom and justice. A virtuous man is a superior man. Confucius suggests that a superior man is free from ignorance. His life is guided by reason, knowledge, wisdom and justice. His life is internally directed, not externally controlled. The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear. Like Confucius, Socrates's voice is also in favour of a virtuous man. According to Socrates, Virtue is knowledge. For Socrates, knowledge and virtue are the same things. Goodness and knowledge are closely related. Vice or evil is the absence of knowledge. Just as knowledge is virtue, so, too, vice is ignorance. Socrates is also of the view that to know the good is to do the good. Through knowledge and wisdom, one can get the touch of virtue and goodness. Therefore, we come across; there is an apparent similarity or resemblance between the

thought of Confucius and that of Socrates. Both of them resemble to their viewpoints upon knowledge, wisdom, justice and virtue.

**Confucius-plato :** Confucius's thought about knowledge, wisdom and justice is closely associated with Plato's (428-348 B.C.) viewpoints. Both of them are exclusively similar in their opinions upon knowledge, wisdom and justice. Like Confucius, Plato wants to establish a society of virtue. To build up a society of virtue individuals must be superior or virtuous. Virtue comes through knowledge and wisdom. According to Plato, virtue is the goodness. For a human individual nothing is to be achieved rather than virtue. Confucius is also of the view that without knowledge and wisdom, virtue of superiority of individuals is impossible, without virtue justice is meaningless. So it is crystal clear and evident that the ideas on knowledge, wisdom and justice of both the philosophers. Confucius and Plato are very similar. Their ultimate destination is one and not different.

**Kautilya (4th Century B.C.) :** Like Confucius, Kautilya advocates for a good ruler in all respect for building a harmonious society. In his major work *Arthashastra*, Kautilya propounds the fundamental and essential principles of a good king. For Kautilya, a king must be aristocratic, intellectually developed, Courageous, just and experienced. A good king should be a man of wisdom. He should be able to conduct the state by virtue of administrative efficiency and practical political experience. In this respect, it must be acknowledged that the philosophy of Kautilya is exclusively associated with that of Confucius. Confucius also propounds a similar sort of philosophy on a just and good ruler. Confucius also wants to establish a harmonious and peaceful society. Confucius is in favour of the theory of philosopher king by Plato. Confucius's thought of a good and just ruler is mostly akin to Kautilya views.

**Al-Farabi (870-950A.D.) :** Al-Farabi considered a ruler as '*Ra'isu'l-Awwal*'. For Farabi a proper and perfect ruler must have several essential qualities for conducting a state. A good ruler must possess the power of good understanding. Through a strong comprehensive power he can administer/rule the people and the state properly with harmony and success. He must be perfect in physical appearance. His physical organs must be in good and perfect order. A ruler should acquire the ability to visualize all the things that have been said. He must have personality and a rigorous sense of individuality. A good and perfect ruler must be a man of wisdom and must possess a high moral character. He must be honest. Like Confucius, Plato and Farabi also advocates for the

concept of philosopher-king. A quality ruler must be a philosopher. He should philosophize the social and political affairs. Farabi emphasizes on the justice of the good ruler. He must be just in all respect in all affairs. In the philosophy of Confucius, we obviously observe all these principles and qualities of a successful ruler mentioned above. So it is evident that Confucius and Al-Farabi, in this connection are similar in their thought.

**Al-Mawardi (974-1058 A.D.) :** Al-Mawardi calls a ruler 'Imam' or 'the Caliph'. He propounds the essential principles, which must be possessed by a perfect ruler. These principles imply that a good and perfect king/Ruler must have a strong power and ability to distinct good and bad, must have the power of sensibility, must utilize the power of five senses, must show his capability in oratory. He should be a good orator or speaker. He must have a good and sound health. He must have intellect, wisdom and Courage.

If we analyze Confucius's philosophy we observe that Mawardi's view on a ruler is closely related to Confucius. Confucius also advocates for those qualities and principles in a perfect ruler.

**Nazamu'l-Mulk Tusi (1017-1091 A.D.) :** According to Nazamu'l-Mulk and Tusi, a good ruler should have: Sound and serene appearance, charitability, courage, personality, kindness and compassion, power in using arms and ammunitions, dexterity, faith in Allah. Confucius also supports these principles for a good ruler. So, Nazamu'l-Mulk is also similar to Confucius in respect of a good ruler.

**Al-Ghazzali (1058-1111 A.D.) :** Al-Ghazzali propounds his views on a good and perfect ruler. He must be free; a manly man, a far-sighted, a courageous, efficient in conducting administration, fearful in God and have the knowledge in Shariyat. We apparently come across the philosophy of Confucius on a good ruler and a good administration in this respect. Confucius has also advocated for these principles and qualities in a good ruler. Therefore both of them are exclusively associated with each other in suspect of their thought and viewpoints.

In fine, it is clearly evident that Confucius's philosophy or thought about a good ruler is mostly similar to his successors. The qualities and principles of a good ruler which are propounded by Confucius in his philosophy have exclusively been supported by the political thinkers and politician after him. It is to be acknowledged that Confucius's thought and ideas have directly influenced the ideas of the philosophers after him. There is an inseparable bridge among them. At present, it



is evident that a ruler who possesses the principles and qualities of a perfect king can conduct the state properly and administer people in right ways. Thus a state develops gradually.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

There is a close and exclusive similitude between Confucius's concept of administration and the present administrative system in modern state. Confucius suggests that state should appoint people in civil service through competitive examinations. A particular public service commission should be formed to hold the examinations. Efficient, experienced and genius persons must be appointed in civil service. Confucius emphasizes on the necessity of hierarchy to execute administration properly. Hierarchy is seen in modern administrative system.

Therefore, we have prevailed the similarities of the concepts of good governance, pioneer of central government, imposition of taxation, personal ownership of property and prices of commodities used in Confucius's philosophy with the modern philosophy and welfare state. So, we can say that Confucius was modern in his political thought.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Confucius's thought and philosophy is relevant to a modern state. It must be acknowledged by everybody that Confucius appeared as a dazzling luminary in the sky not

only of Chinese intellectual stars but also in the arena of world scholars. His theories, thought and philosophy were universal. He did not confine himself his philosophy and teachings to a particular range. He endeavored to spread the light of education to enlighten the human beings. His thought and philosophy was noble, great and generous. Confucius's dream vision was enlightenment, humanity and peace. His personality was versatile and multi-dimensional. Still, Confucius is regarded as the Foremost Teacher of China by crores of Chinese people. He has touched almost all branches of knowledge and wisdom.

To understand Chinese politics one has to go back nearly three thousand years to the teachings of Confucius, whose ideas have had a remarkable influence on culture and hence politics to this day. Commonly thought of as a religion in the West, Confucianism is actually as much as a code of social conduct. For our purposes, the most important aspect of Confucianism is its principle that people should accept their place in the social hierarchy. The living should respect their ancestors, women their husbands, children their fathers and everyone their superiors.

### **REFERENCES**

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