

Session 1 What is Confucianism

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1. Ruism or Confucianism?

Ru儒: ruzhe儒者/ rushi儒士= Ru person),
儒家= Ru Family/school of Ru;
儒教=Ru teaching/ Religion of Ru,
儒学Ru Studies/ Learning of Ru

Kongzi孔子/ Fufuzi孔夫子 Christianized name of Kongfuzi from Jesuit
Kong Surname of Confucius
zi 子= Son; boy= representatives from Hundred Schools(经史子集)
fuzi 夫子= Respect title to call master Kong

Ren人: standing up person= human; who has no morality to stand on equals to animal

Da大: stretch, outspread person=big

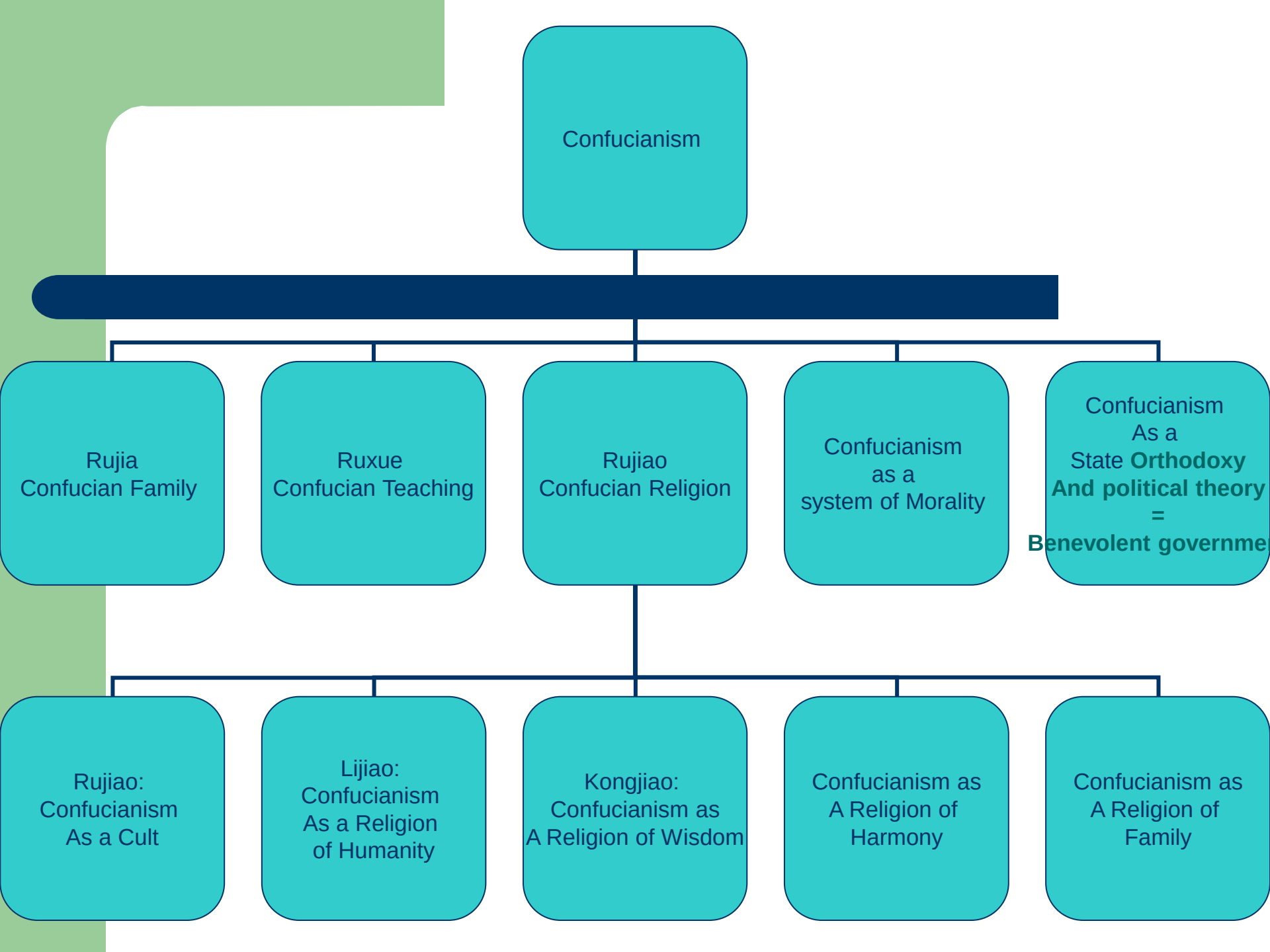
Tian天: sky, heaven where human individual cannot break through

Fu夫: Husband, farmer= long time hard work;

功夫not only refer to martial arts but to mean anything need to be achieved through long period of time;**有功夫** means to have reached to a high level of achievement in doing something;**大丈夫**= people who owned energy/force to standing alongside with Heaven and Earth; **天道** Way of Heaven— **圣人**Sage---**人道** way of humans; **人定胜天**Conquer Heaven through firm/ sturdy doing one thing; **尽性知天** knowing heaven through knowing nature

The Development Stages of *Ru* before Confucius

- *Ru* referred to dancers and musicians in religious rituals, who were characterised by their softness and flexibility
= shamans, magicians and sorcerers
- *Ru* were masters of rituals and ceremonies, who performed or assisted the performance of various rituals
= experts in religious rites
- Ritual masters became teachers in official education = persons who have mastered **history, poetry, music, astrology, archery** and **mathematics** which were closely related to rituals in ancient times and have responsibility of training and teaching.



Ru, Confucius and Confucianism

- Confucianism is more a tradition generally rooted in Chinese culture and nurtured by Confucius and Confucians rather than a religion created, or a new value system initiated by Confucius alone.
- It is a distinctive 'school' began with Confucius.
- It was Confucius who explored deeply and elaborated extensively on the basic principles of what was to become Confucianism,
- But Confucianism was not created solely by Confucius and Confucianism was not sustained exclusively by the faith in Confucius
- Confucianism is a misnomer for a tradition called ru 儒

2. The Role of Confucius in Confucianism

- Confucius played a key role in the development of the tradition originated long before his time,
- It was Confucius and his disciples who succeeded in transmitting and transforming their ancient culture.
- He is usually regarded as a '**sage-teacher**', or sage, but seldom as the **Saviour**, and never as the **Lord** (unlike Jesus and Buddha)

The Change of Role of *Ru* in Confucius (Spring and Autumn: 771/722-403 BCE) time

- Along with the decline of cultic practices and the rise of rationalism, a large number of *ru* departed from the officially assigned profession and entered various areas of social life
- They became distinctive for their skills in state rituals and in official and private ducations

Rise of Confucius in Private Education

- The character *ru* was also extended to become a specific term for those who had skills of ritual, history, poetry, music, mathematics and archery, and who lived off their knowledge of all kinds of ceremonies and of many other subjects
- Among the teachers of these disciplines, Confucius stood out as an outstanding *ru* of his time

The Fundamental Change of *Ru* Tradition in the Time of Confucius

- By the time of Confucius, the *ru* had **fundamentally changed their social and cultural functions**, which is different from the way of earlier masters of dance and music.
- Confucius worked on **the cultural heritage of *ru*** on one hand, and on **the transformation of *ru*** tradition on the other hand.
- **Confucius transmission and interpretation of the ancient culture** and his **practice of education** played a major part in shaping and reshaping the *ru* tradition.

Understanding Confucius

- Confucius: A Portrait
- Confucius: The Teacher
- Confucius: The Teachings
- **Reading: Berthrong, 1998: 13-23; Yao, 2000: 21-26; Shryock, 1966, Lin, 1994: 26-161**

Confucius =Kong Fuzi=master Kong (551-479 BCE)

- Confucius was born and lived in Later Zhou Dynasty (1100?-249BCE)
- During Spring and Autumn period (771-403BCE), the grasps of the Zhou Kings over the states had weakened, states competed with one other for bigger share of land and property
- In order to save the world from disorder and the people from suffering, many thinkers to explore the cause of the chaos and disorder and expanded their way of problem solving.

Confucius' Offer

- Confucius believed that **chaos and disorder developed from the misuse of rituals/ propriety (*li*) and music (*yue*)**: the decay of ritual and the collapse of music.
- For him chaos and disorders **could not be corrected under a bad government**, in which neither ruler nor minister acted in accordance with the true values of their roles (正名: 名不正则言不顺) .
- To establish a righteous government, both the ruler and the minister must follow the ancient rites, which will made government works depending on the power of moral virtues, through faith in the people.
- In order to set up guidelines for good family and social life, Confucius reinterpreted the **meaning** and **methods** of **learning and education** of the *ru* tradition.

Two Level's Tasks of Confucius

- The **restoration** of social and moral excellence
- The **cultivation of purity** within the heart of individuals.
- As Confucius held office for only a few years, and saw that he was unable to realize his tasks through political path, he devoting his life to teach disciples and editing ancient classics, in the expectation that the disciples would carry on his work and pass his teaching to later generation.
- He became the initiator of the Chinese private education. He was a well-know master and educator for most of his life

3. Confucius' Teaching

- The **main concern** of Confucius was with **humans** and with the **fundamental principles of humanity**.
- Confucius believed that these principles were the root of social relationships, the foundation of the stability, peace and prosperity of the **state**, the **family** and **individuals**.
- He developed his ethics around two central theses; that goodness can be taught and learned, and that society can only be in harmony and at peace under the guidance of moral wisdom.

Confucius' Teaching 2

- He further developed a system of concepts to expound the central theses.
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- Of these concepts, four became the underlying ideas of the Confucian tradition, namely, the Way (dao) 道, the ritual/propriety (li) 礼, the humaneness (ren) 仁, and the virtue (de) 德.
- These four concepts became the backbone of the ideological structure of a Confucian state in later stage .

Confucius and *Ruxue*: the Confucian Teaching

- It is commonly agreed that as a distinctive school Confucianism took shape in the hands of Confucius and he was responsible for the formation of the basics of Confucianism
- **His commanding personality** and **profundity of knowledge** attracted many followers and he himself became the centre of gravity and the embodiment of Confucius virtues.
- **His understanding of the world** and **religious matters** led the Confucian tradition to the direction of rationalism and humanism, which characterizes Confucian practices, either secular or religious.
- **He deliberated on many important concepts**, which laid down the very foundation for Confucian doctrines.
- **He virtually instituted a pedagogic tradition** which transcended the class distinctions.
- **And he painted a picture of the gentleman/virtuous man as an attainable ideal.**
- All these become the backbone of **Confucian Way**.

Confucius and Religion (*Rujiao*)

- Devoting himself wholeheartedly to solving human problems, Confucius propagated the **value of education, virtue and self-cultivation**
- On the one hand Confucius kept a distance from religious matters such as serving 'spirits and ghosts', and would rather talk about this life than the life after (Lunyu11:12)
- on the other hand, he held a deep faith in Heaven and destiny (ming命), and preserved religious rituals strictly
- Although he believed in his mission that was endowed by Heaven, he never saw himself as the leader or founder of a religious tradition; what he did was merely to transmit the ancient culture, which in his mind was the model for the present and the guarantee for the future.

Confucianism as a 'Family'(Rujia)

- **Confucius** was recognized as the **symbols of the *ru***, and the *ru* gradually became a specific term for those who followed Confucius to interpret and teach the classics, and those who engaged themselves in administration, education and the preservation of ancient rituals and music.
- The multidimensional themes raised in Confucius' conversations and the rich sources of his teaching made it possible for the members of the *ru* to develop different understandings and interpretations of Confucius and his philosophy.
- The differences in the methods of learning and practice led to a variety of sections within the broad category of the rujia儒家:

The Meanings of Jia 家

- Jia 家 means home, family or household. One would not be counted as having a home or family until he/she has brought wild animals (boar) under control in the house.
- Then it was gradually extended to refer to a group including parents and their children and others.
- When jia is used to refer to a religious tradition, it gives us a picture of how a religious organization is formed: just like the state which is an extended form of family, religion is also constructed in family relationships.
- From the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) on, the character Jia was used to refer to the group or school of a religious and philosophical community society.

Rujia 儒家

- Rujia means the school of literati or scholars who have committed themselves to the tradition of the ru.
- As a school, rujia sought to make the Way of ancient sage-kings prevail again in the present world.
- The Way of ancient was understood as multidimensional in its contents, including the vision of harmony, the rules of propriety, the values of rituals and rites, virtues and methods of a benevolent government.
- Like many schools, the ru transmitted these teachings and principles through forging a seemingly unbroken chain of master-disciples.
- Its practices were characterized by untiring study of, and instruction on ancient writings, and by performing rituals and playing music properly under the guidance of masters.

Jia: home, a structure of family

Jia (家) in Chinese Writing Systems

Oracle bone Inscription



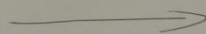
豕 = pig

Bronze Inscriptions



宀 = House

Seal Characters



2008/1/5 A Type of housing in ancient China in which people themselves lived upstairs and kept domestic animals downstairs

- being extended to refer to a group of people who are devoted to the same ideal and who form among themselves relationship which are like those of a large family.

Family Structure of a Religious and Philosophical Organization

Founder = Shizu (师祖) : Teacher +

Master's wife =
Shiniang (师娘) :
Teacher + Mother

Master = Shifu (师父) :
Teacher + Father

Master's Brother =
Shishu (师叔) or
Shibo (师伯) :
Teacher + Uncle

Disciples = dizi (弟子) :
Younger + son

The Younger Disciples
(Male) = shidi (师弟) :
from same teacher +
Younger Brother

The elder disciples +
shixiong (师兄) : from the
same teacher + elder
brother

The younger disciples
(female) = shimei (师妹) :
Younger Sister from
same teacher

Variety of sections within the broad category of the *rujia*

- **Various Groups among Confucius Disciples;**
- **Spring and Autumn period (771-476BCE):** 72 贤人 of 3000 disciples
- **Warring State Period (475-221 BCE):** Mencius and Xunzi;
- **Han Dynasty:** Han Ru (New Text School; Old Text School) (connecting Confucianism to religion)
- **Song-Ming Dynasties:** Neo Confucianism (School of Principle; School of Heart/mind),
- **Rujia at Overseas:** Korea Ru, Japanese Ru; Ruism applied by the Four Small dragons
- **Modern New Confucianism:** XIONG Shili, Weiming TU, Zhongying CHENG, Xizhong YAO