

Confucianism - Eastern Zhou

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Entry tags: Chinese Religion, Religious Group

Confucianism according to Paul Rakita Goldin



Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 BCE

Region: Warring States China

Region tags: Asia, East Asia

Generated with guidance from Professor Armin Selbitschka. a) The eastern part of Gansu (especially the Fangmatan site near Tianshui; excavation report: Wenwu 1989.2: 1-11 and 31; for the sake of convenience, I will attach a digital copy of the report below) b) Shaanxi c) Shanxi d) Hebei e) Henan f) Shandong g) Jiangsu h) Anhui i) Zhejiang j) Hubei k) Hunan

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Paul Rakita Goldin, 2005, *After Confucius*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press
- Source 2: Paul Rakita Goldin, 2011, *Confucianism*, Berkeley, LA: University of California Press
- Source 3: Goldin, Paul R., 1999, *Rituals of the Way, the Philosophy of Xunzi*, Chicago and La Salle, Ill.: Open Court

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 400 BCE - 200 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199920082/obo-9780199920082-0060.xml>

Relevant online primary textual corpora (original languages and/or translations):

- Source 1 URL: <https://ctext.org/analects>

- Source 1 Description: Lunyu 論語
- Source 2 URL: <https://ctext.org/mengzi>
- Source 2 Description: Mengzi 孟子
- Source 3 URL: <https://ctext.org/xunzi>
- Source 3 Description: Xunzi 荀子

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Yes

Specific to this answer:

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Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– Yes

↳ Assigned by some other factor:

– Yes [specify]: assigned by subscribing a set of values

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– Yes

Notes: Although "proselytize and recruit" may apply best to a different context, it can be said that at least during the Warring States period supporters of Confucianism actively engaged in teaching what they recognized as core values of Confucianism.

Does the religion have official political support

– No

Notes: Not until the Han dynasty; local lords may have endorsed it temporarily.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 CE

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Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

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Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also “oral scriptures” (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– Yes

Notes: texts like the Odes 詩經 and Lunyu 論語 will become core references for supporters of Confucianism to validate their own claims. The texts as we know them today will be shaped in later times (Han dynasty), but their content was partially circulating in various forms during the Warring States period.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 CE

Status of Participants: ✓ Elite



Are they written:

– Yes

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 600 BCE - 200 CE

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↳ Are they oral:

– Yes

Notes: Goldin 2011: 9

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↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:

– Yes

Notes: There is a general belief that ancient kings and sages from the past gave birth to a series of texts. These figures are in general human, but of incredible wisdom. Sometimes texts are attributed to Confucius himself (e.g., Shangshu 尚書; see Goldin 2011:8), or to his disciples (e.g., Chunqiu zuozhuan 春秋左傳).

↳ Revealed by a high god:

– No

↳ Revealed by other supernatural being:

– No

↳ Inspired by high god:

– No

↳ Inspired by other supernatural being:

– No

↳ Originated from divine or semi-divine human beings:

– No

↳ Originated from non-divine human being:

– Yes

Notes: For Confucians, sages are people who were able to perfect themselves (Goldin 2011: 5); figures of sages and ancient kings will eventually be seen as 'divine', but this is a later process (Han dynasty and later).

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: temples as loci of ritual activity, but little is known about their structure and style

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– I don't know

Is iconography present:

– No

Notes: at least not for the period of time here under review

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer “no” only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: see e.g., Paul R. Goldin, 2003, “A Mind-Body Problem in the Zhuangzi?” in *Hiding the World in the World: Uneven Discourses on the Zhuangzi*, ed. Scott Cook, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany), 226-47.



Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Yes

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– I don't know

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes

↳ Human sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: mass human sacrifices will stop in the Eastern Zhou period, with some exceptions (e.g., the tomb of the first Emperor). Some scholars believe that small statues representing human figures started being buried in tomb to replace human beings.

↳ Out-group humans are sacrificed:

– No

↳ In-group humans are sacrificed:

– Yes

Notes: usually, concubines and slaves were sacrificed.

↳ Animal co-sacrifices present:

– Yes

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: for the élite class.

↳ Personal effects:

– Yes

↳ Valuable items:

– Yes

↳ Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):

– Yes

↳ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):

– Yes

↳ Other valuable/precious items interred:

– Yes [specify]: manuscripts on bamboo strips

Are formal burials present:

– I don't know

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: According to the Lunyu (7.21), Confucius did not talk about spirits (Shen 神), but other references prove that he believed in their existence and the need to sacrifice to them (e.g, Lunyu 2.24).

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– No

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– No

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Human spirits' knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– Yes

Notes: e.g., lineage matters

↳ Human spirits have memory of life:

– Yes

Notes: it seems they believed to have memory of family members

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it

relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:
Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously “moral” or “ethical” norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– I don't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other religions:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other polities:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about sex:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about laziness:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about sorcery:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about non-lethal fighting:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about shirking risk:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about disrespecting elders:

– I don't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about gossiping:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about performance of rituals:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:

– Field doesn't know

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– No

Notes: not paying sacrifices causes calamities, but it is not straightforwardly clear the the spirits are acting behind those calamities.

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Yes

Notes: reward should in this case be understood as blessing, "correct performance of these rites was crucial to securing the blessing of the spirit", Goldin 2011: 7.

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– Yes

Notes: in Lunyu 9.5 Confucius seems to imply that "Heaven put him on this earth in order to teach mankind", Goldin 2011: 30; in Mengzi 孟子 there are hints of his belief that he himself was the new sage came on earth, but not recognized as such.

↳ Is the messiah's whereabouts or time of coming known?

– Yes

Notes: in the Mengzi 孟子 there are hints at the fact that Mencius himself was the new sage

↳ Coming on specified date:

– Yes

Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: e.g, humanity 仁, Goldin 2011: 18-19

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– Yes

↳ What is the nature of this distinction:

– Present and clear

Notes: according to Confucius, conventional rules can be changes if morality requires it (Goldin 2011: 9, 21, 23). Hence there seems to be a distinction between the nature of the two

↳ Are specifically moral norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Specifically moral norms are implicitly linked to vague metaphysical concepts:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are explicitly linked to vague metaphysical entities:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked to impersonal cosmic order (e.g. karma):

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked in some way to an anthropomorphic being:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are linked explicitly to commands of anthropomorphic being:

– No

↳ Specifically moral norms are have no special connection to metaphysical:

– Yes

↳ Moral norms apply to:

– All individuals within society

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Yes

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- ↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):
Performances here refers to small-scale rituals.
– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:
I.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”
– Yes

- ↳ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:
– Field doesn't know

- ↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):
Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.
– Field doesn't know

- ↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:
Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.
– Yes

- ↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:
Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.
– No

- ↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:
– I don't know

- ↳ Is there use of intoxicants:
– No

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:
E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.
– No

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– No

Notes: at least not in the context of practices.

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– A state

Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– No

Notes: note however that Mencius believed that governments had to ensure minimum standards for people's materiality before begin the project of moral transformation (Gold 2011: 62)

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– No

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– No

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– No

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– No

Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– No

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– No

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– No

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– No

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– No

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– No

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– No

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– No

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No