

The Relevance of the Confucius Teachings in the Modern Age

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Abstract: The main purpose of the article is to reveal the ideas of the great Chinese thinker Confucius in detail, to identify the main factors which influenced the formation of his philosophical views, as well as the main stages of the thinker's life. Research methods: systemic, historical, formal-logical, abstract, analogical, and other methods were used. The article provides information about the concepts of "sun zi" (noble person) and "xiǎo rén" (rotten person) in the teachings of Confucius, and also states such properties of a "noble person" as "ren" (humanity), "li" (custom), "xin" (devotion), "yi" (duty), "zhi" (clear-thinking) in detail. In the final part of the article, it states that the thinker's ideas are still relevant in solving global problems in our modern society.

Keywords: Philosophy, Confucius, idea, manners, rules, humanity, customs, loyalty, thinking, person.

Introduction

Chinese civilization is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. Confucius, as the founder of Confucianism, developed philosophical and moral teachings that regulate the life of eastern peoples. Philosophy Confucius made a huge contribution to the spiritual development of society, especially to the moral education of the younger generation. These foundations emphasize the relevance of Confucius' teachings in our view.

Trudy Confucius (551-479 AD), the founder of Confucianism in China, is known to the world as philosophical and moral teachings that regulate all aspects of the life of Eastern peoples from ancient times to our days, and they have a great importance for society, state structure and people's lives. Scientists studying the teachings of Confucius emphasize his enormous influence on the world community, especially on the philosophical teachings of Eastern countries, and the relevance of his study. Confucius, as the spiritual leader (father) of the Chinese people, left a huge universal human

legacy to the entire world; this teaching, which corresponds to Chinese ideology, is perceived not only as a concept, but also as a religion

Russian scholars from the XIX century. began to study and spread Chinese culture.

Philosophical and moral teachings of Confucius contribute to the strengthening of socio-political, spiritual and international relations of Kyrgyz society. Over time, some shortcomings of these studies became apparent. It is clear why Central Asian countries are now more interested in Eastern philosophical and ethical teachings. The main question of the study: “Why the basic ideas of the Confucius doctrine have not lost their relevance to this day?”.

The article is aimed at solving the following tasks:

- to analyze the ideas of Confucius, his biography in the context of modern globalization processes;

- to identify and characterize the impact of Confucius's humanistic concept on consciousness.

This study is focused on the main ideology of Confucianism.

Methods and Materials

Historical analysis and research methods of social philosophy are used in this study. The book of “Lun Yu” which reflects Confucius thoughts is used as the basis for analyzing the materials.

The works of Russian and Chinese scientists in the field of Chinese studies Wáng jiànli, M.Y. Sidorov [1], P.A. Bulangenin [2], V.A. Vasiliev [4], L.S. Perelomov [5], V.Z. Klepikov [6], T.M. Addykaarova [7], E.K. Sharipova [7, 9], A.T. Akmatyaliyev [7-9] represent the theoretical basis of the study. The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of providing students studying ancient Chinese philosophy with a comprehensive philosophical analysis of the main factors shaping philosophical thinking.

In the XIX century the interest in Confucianism, which form the base of Chinese philosophy strengthens in Russia. Disputes between Slavic and Western scholars arose during the discussion of Confucius' ideas. The researchers Wang Jianli and M. Y. Sidorov mentioned that Confucius teachings had a great influence on the work of the great Russian writer L.N. Tolstoy [1].

Since the beginning of the 19th century, a number of scientific works have been created by scholars in Russian society with the aim of popularizing Chinese culture and Confucian philosophy. For the first time “Lun Yu” was translated into Russian by the recognized father of the sinology N. J. Bichurin (1777-1853), but this work was not published. Then the translations of orientalist V.P. Vasiliev (1876) and P.S. Popov (1910) were published. Currently, there are a number of translations “Lun Yu” by V.M. Alekseev, V.A. Krivtsov, L.I. Golovachev, I.I. Semenenko, A.S. Martynov, L.S. Perelomov and A.E. Lukyanov. However, among all translations, the work of the Confucianist and orientalist L.S. Perelomov is in the first place (1998; second edition - 2000). For that, critical analysis were carried out to the Confucius canon under the guidance of L.S. Perelomov and his followers, as well as to all early translations in Russian, English, German, French, Japanese and Korean languages. As the result, full Russian version of “Four Books” [1] was published in 2004.

Confucius' ideas were embodied in canons created by his disciples and followers. There are 13 classical canons of Confucian teachings (up to 40 volumes). The most important of them are the works 四书 “Si shu” (“Four Books”) and 五经 “Wu jing” (“Five Books”). All the classical works of Confucius were written in Old Chinese, written form in the literary style Wenyan (文言 wénán, “culture of speech” or “written speech”).

Result and discussion

As for the biography of the thinker, Kong zi, or Confucius, was known as the founder of philosophical theory in ancient China. His philosophical thoughts have great significance as a symbol of modern China, and he is considered as the first teacher of Chinese. It is also clear to everyone that the establishment of the Chinese state was founded on the Confucius teachings.

The great thinker was born in the small town of Qufu (Цюйфу) in the territory of the modern province of Shandong during the Lu dynasty. When Confucius was three years old, his father Shu Liang died. As a child, he was distinguished by obedience to his mother's instructions, respect for his elders and intelligence. He liked to play games as rituals and sacrifices. When he was seven, his mother sent him to school to get a decent education, where he was recognized as a hard-working and smart boy. At the age of seventeen, he had been appointed assistant to his teacher Ping-Chong, who was the mayor of the city at that time, where Confucius lived with his mother. The ancient books in his school greatly influenced on the growth of Confucius's intellectual development and spiritual purification of his heart, because young Confucius read them tirelessly day and night.

Upon graduation, Confucius began working in the civil service on the recommendation of his mother. Every morning, he visited the market to control the quality of the products on the market and checked the quality of meat, bread and fruit together with his experienced people. He supported honest and dutiful traders and punished those who cheated. He had made great success working honestly and fulfilling his responsibilities. His free time was still devoted to science and learning new things.

When he was 19 years old, he married an adult daughter of the family named Qi guan shi. In a year, he had a son, then a daughter. However, despite of this, Confucius could not feel happy. No matter how hard he tried, he had no love for his wife, but he had promotion in his career. The head of the kingdom of Lu and his surrounding officials unanimously elected Confucius inspector of irrigated lands, forests and livestock, at the same time he was given the right to formulate, adopt and repeal rules and laws.

In this position Confucius was able to show the highest capacity for work, but suddenly in B.C. In 528 his mother died, and according to the custom of that time he refused the civil service. This period was a period of complete change in his life, because he had much free time to study historical documents, customs, rituals, ancient music, values left by the ancestors. Researching the biography of the thinker and the main periods of his life, it is possible to say that philosophical reflections of Confucius began precisely at this period. In 522 BC the cherished dream of his life was implemented, as he and his close disciples began a journey through the scattered kingdoms of China [2].

Confucius teachings are voluminous and important, and they encompass the human concepts and certain problems of peoples' life. In the history of Confucian teachings, the teachings of him are regarded as the category including moral and socio-political rules. It is not surprising that the general rules of behavior described above have been passed from generation to generation for three thousand years. Moreover, these rules are applied as the basis for educating people, shaping peoples' behaviour and way of thinking in the family, at work and in the Chinese society. The main objective of Confucian education is diversified through the establishment of an ideal social order through moral education and the development of a personal culture.

The suggestions for the head of state and branches of power are clearly presented in the thoughts of the thinker more than 2500 years ago. It states: “When the trust of the people to the emperor and officials is great, it is possible to take the direction towards stable development. People's trust can never be broken by outside forces” [3-4].

“Sun zi” (Цзюнь-цзы) is considered one of the greatest human qualities. This term was taken from Shi-jin (Book of Songs) by Confucius, in which “Sun zi” is frequently used and means “son of the state” or “noble man/person”. And Confucius used this term not only to show forefathers and background of a person as above mentioned “son of the state” or “noble man/person”, but also as a kind of category to determine personal qualities. Confucius writes: “Sun zi” is a perfect husband or a man and he is engaged in idealizing his thinking and behavior”.

He believed that only when each person worked on himself and tried to become “Sun zi”, it was possible to notice the society's development for the better. This rule primarily referred to the

ruler/head, as it was believed that the head of a ‘heavenly country’ should be accepted as a model to resemble by the common people.

The opposite of “sun zi” is “xiao ren” (rotten person), and for this person the material value is higher than spiritual wealth. If a noble man thinks of justice, “xiao ren” thinks only of his own interests, if a noble man aspires to the higher, “xiao ren” goes to the bottom. Therefore, one can only meet the requirements of the rules of moral behavior identified by Confucius, when one is self-reflexing and constantly engaged in enhancing one’s thinking.

Sun zi is an honorable man, scholar, official, statesman, and as he is elevated, he behaves modestly and embodies the five leading qualities characteristic to a man:

1) “ren” means being humane, humaneness, and it shouldn’t be taken for the romantic love, between man and woman, but instinctive feelings of person given by nature, which are the impetus to the emergence of consciousness and civilization. Therefore, in the doctrine of Confucius “ren” is presented as the divergence between people and animals, and contradicts the qualities as cruelty, betrayal and callousness, so “ren” is compared with the tree.

2) “li” means observance of customs, rituals, decency, respect for parents, tenderness and is associated with ‘the fire’;

3) “xin” denotes devotion, sincerity, kindness, and it is said that it does not allow hypocrisy and is compared to ‘the earth’;

4) “yi” means duty, justice, it is believed that the noble man necessarily obeys “yi”.

It is also said that subjection «yi» is not considered a sin of self-interest, but a person who obeys “yi” can understand the correctness of such behavior. As an example, it can be explained that the child understands the duty in front of his parents, and he owes acknowledgment of gratitude to his parents for his upbringing. “yi” confronts egoism. It is said that ‘noble man’ seeks “yi”, and ‘rotten man’ seeks his own benefit” - and this category is compared with ‘iron’;

5) “Zhi” explains right-mindedness and wisdom. “Zhi” person can predict the results and consequences of what he says and does, and can feel like in his shoes. “Zhi” is compared with the element of ‘water’ in Confucius teachings, and opposed to stubbornness and stupidity [5-6].

Therefore, it is possible to find solutions to the problems of political literacy, proper education, building relationships and environmental problems in modern Kyrgyz society in the teachings of Confucius. Analyzing some sections of “Lun Yu”, one can come to the following conclusion: Confucian teachings are very important to Chinese as well as Islam to Muslims.

Conclusion

Confucius said: “The noble man never gives up humaneness, even when he is in a hurry or when his life is in danger. If he renounced humaneness, how can we call him a noble man?” [6] . Therefore, if a noble man is required to choose one of the principles of humaneness and life, surely he will necessarily choose humaneness. For a noble man a worthy death is more significant than choosing an aimless life. It can be said that Sun zi is an ideal person with perfect behavior, education, honour and reputation. Patience, comprehensive understanding of life is characteristic to him, therefore he is irritated by pettiness and impudence. Confucius called this way as “the golden middle” and believed that it could be achieved by observing the rule of “Li”. Respect without Lee can turn into impudence, loyalty into timidity, strength into violence, and straightforwardness into coarseness.

When we look at Confucius’ teaching as a whole, it can be divided into independent or autonomous parts (ethics and metaphysics). As a rule, while studying each circumstance and problem, we proceed to investigate it only after we have conceptualized it as a general object. In most cases, if we use the European concept of humanitarian theory and use methodologies oriented from abstraction to specificity, the abstract stage of cognition is not viewed in the teachings of Confucius. It can also be noted that logically, it is directed from specificity to abstraction, and the role of the abstract stage is performed by practical-learning activities. Confucius was concerned with accurately

characterizing the specific and comprehensive eternal truth and clarity. It is problematic to split Confucius' teachings into categories and separate parts, and finally to assemble and view them as a whole. Without understanding one category, one cannot recognize the others.

There is no doubt that the category of “Zhen” (humanity, humane-love) in Confucius' teachings is closely associated with the category of “Li” (customs, rituals) by its material meaning. Humanity can be comprehended as the accomplishment of custom, if it is expressed in the principles of correcting the relationship of people. Therefore, if humanity is the soul of society, we can say that customs are its body.

“I have not invented anything new, I convey the thoughts left by our ancestors” - as Confucius said, he systematized views in historical books. The reason is that his contemporaries did not comprehend the knowledge preserved in the written form that was given in disorder.

The main goal of Confucius' life was to build a strong and developed state for the Chinese people, and wanted the ruling emperors and officials to be educated and set the right policies. It can be said that Confucius teachings corresponded to the period when China was splitted into scattered khanates, disagreeing with each other and of course, external enemies attacks increased, so it was a relevant teaching police within the state.

In addition, one of the main ideologies of Confucius' teachings was the upbringing of a proper, educated and just person. It can be said that an educated person is expected to have a good family and give a decent education to his children, as a result of which society and the state will develop. Another key to the thinker's teachings is that a child should serve his father and the nation with all his heart.

In conclusion, the principles are very prevalent in the study of the thinker and this cannot be stated in two words. However, since this teaching corresponds to the mentality and views of the Chinese people, it has found millions of supporters in China and Asian countries; it is accepted not only as a doctrine or philosophy, but also as a religion.

In conclusion, the research has given the following result: the essence of Confucius life was forming humanistic qualities in the hearts of people of different status and ensure prosperity, development and growth of the whole nation. Really, if each person acquires qualities characteristic to the noble man, if each person establishes a reliable family, if their children see the behavior of their parents and get a decent upbringing, then a worthy head of a state, responsible people would have revealed themselves and society would have sustainable development to ensure the development of modern society. You and me constitute the society. For instance, first we form a family, so a family means a small society and the state is built from a small society. Ignoring the problems in the family could lead to the problems of the state in future. Greater attention must be paid to the role of institutions that nurture each person from childhood and the work they do. We may think that we are educating our child in the right way at home, but we must not forget that the community around him has a great influence.

Confucius teachings are similar to the philosophy of great thinkers from previous era, strive to create a society where the main problem is to live in peace, get along with each other, trust each other, be kind, and live in harmony with others.

Modern Chinese culture is establishing a prosperous and growing society following Confucius principles. The social structures of our young and independent state can learn from Confucius principles and can use them, if appropriate.

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