

# SHAMANISM

EAST1504/4504

UNIT 2.1

# Shamanism

- Word "shaman" derives from Manchu-Tungus "saman" ("The Most Knowledgeable"); Shamanism still important in the region of North-east China today
- Animistic cults of North-East Eurasia
- Shamanism is often only one part of the cultic system of a society
- Usually hereditary (female lineage) but also vocational (sometimes people with a psychical disease which gets "reinterpreted" by society)
- "Asylum space" for maladapted individuals

# Definitions:

- "Technique of ecstasy" (Mircea Eliade)
- Special mode of life, which makes possible the bringing of the sacred symbols, images, and elements to the profane world – way of mediating between the sacred and profane.
- Characteristic: low availability for the "unselected", very low degree of systemization, absence of any serious organization (clan cult), high degree of practicality and very sensual, concrete nature of "the sacred" (spirits as animals and humans). Very low ethical content, low degree of abstraction.

- Technique of "controlled" trance
- Often keepers of tradition (recite poems, epos, etc.)
- Revelation of the sacred in the profane world (*hierophany*)
- Initiation rites ("death" [dismembering, purification] and "rebirth"; sexual motives, helping spirits, loss of consciousness, dreams, visions of spirits and animals, journey to the underworld or Heaven; frequent topics:
  - Cosmic Tree which bridges the world of the profane and the sacred
  - Cosmic Mountain)

- Shamanist elements in early layers of East Asian cults and myths
- JAPAN: "Myth of the Cave of Heaven":  
Sun-Goddess Amaterasu, offended by the behaviour of her brother Susanoo (wind deity), withdrew into the "Cave of Heaven", and the world lost light. The other gods, however, succeeded in luring her out of the cave by the means of "divine entertainment" (*kami-asobi*) – naked dances followed by laughter. This "divine entertainment" strongly resembles a Shamanist ceremony for attracting a heavenly deity to descend upon a shaman.
- Early female rulers in Japan (2nd, 3rd cent.) are described as female shamans in Chinese sources (kannabi-yama "deity-inhabited mountains" as cultic centers)
- Also shamanist elements in some "new" Jap. Religions

E.g. Nakayama Miki 中山みき

(1798-1887). "Foundress of Tenri-kyô. After powerful revelatory experiences, Nakayama engaged in faith healing and rituals for safe childbirth. Later she preached the salvation of human beings, whom she called the "children" of the "parent kami" (Oyagami). Her written works include *Mikagura-uta* (Songs for the Sacred Dance) and *Ofudesaki* (Tip of the Divine Writing Brush)."

- In recent years new "shamanistic" movements in Japan

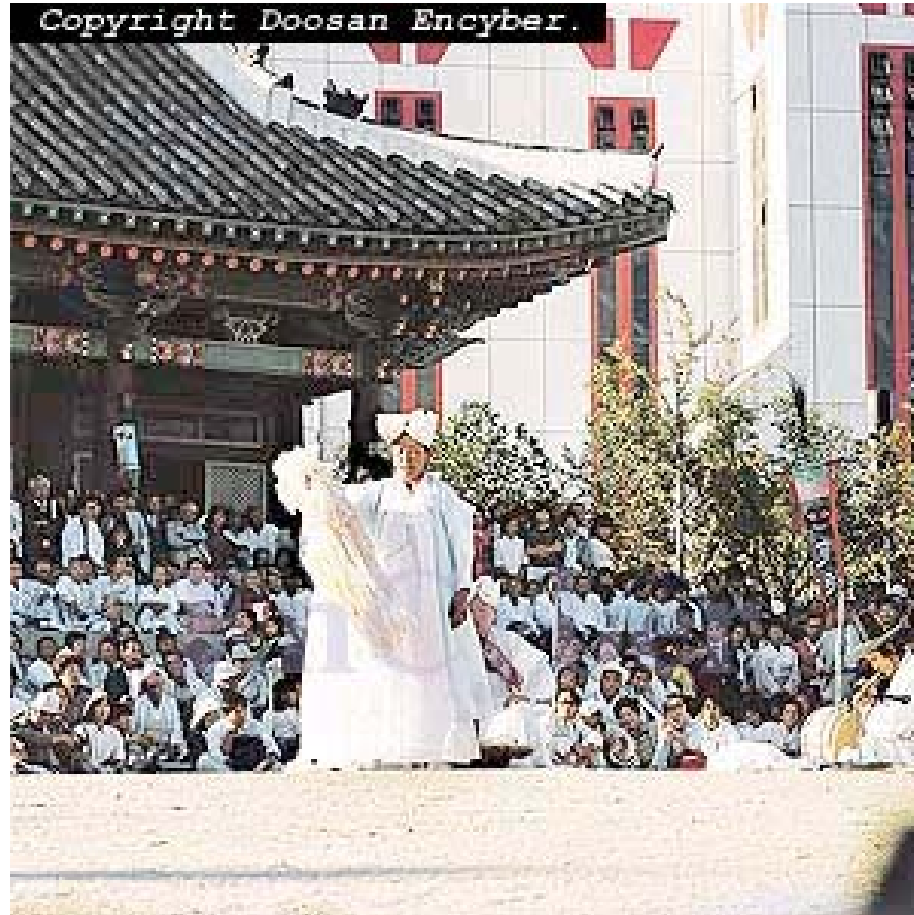
- **KOREA:**

According to Chinese sources of the 3rd cent.: "In each town, one man is appointed master of ceremonies for worship of the spirit of heaven, and this master is called "Lord of Heaven". Each community has a separate town which they call *sodo*. Here they set up a great tree, from which they hang bells and drums for serving the ghosts and spirits. All manner of refugees who enter there are exempt from extradition." "Great tree" represented the "axis of the world". Female rulers in 7<sup>th</sup> cent. Korea also had a reputation for prophesying the future (typical Shamanist pursuit).

- Shamanism in modern South Korea is considered as an element of national identity, influential in daily life (ca. 200,000 shamans today)



Photograph of a South Korean shaman, Yi Haegyŏng, designated as a "national intangible cultural treasure", performs a ritual dance. Her autobiography, where she tells about her experience of the "shamanic disease" (initiatory sickness) and initiation, became a bestseller in South Korea.



Shamanistic ritual practiced in the southern parts of Korea for the Benefit of the dead in the other world.



- **CHINA (on Oracle Bone Inscriptions see also UNIT 1):**

Shang Dynasty: The authority of the rulers is derived from their ability to correspond with the spirits of their ancestors and conduct divinations with the help of these spirits. "Oracle-bone inscriptions" on turtle plastron – were used in *pyromantic* divination – hot poker was applied to produce a series of cracks, and then the future was read through them. The rulers were also supposed "to dance for rain" – to conduct Shamanist rites themselves. Another object of ritualised request was the High God (*di* 帝), able to influence rain and thunder. Usually only the ancestors were the totally trustworthy, reliable spiritual powers. The ruler, as the only person able to properly propitiate the royal ancestors, wielded huge theocratic power, regarding the whole of the kingdom as his personal household (at least, in theory). In many cases, the kings wanted the diviners to ask the spirits whether on such and such date the sacrifices of certain kind to certain ancestral spirits will be appropriate –

"Shall we sacrifice one hundred Qiang people (proto-Tibetan nomads) and one hundred sets of sheep and pigs to King Tang, Great Ancestors Jian and Ding, and Grandfather Yi?"

The sacrifices (of cattle and humans) were often accompanied by music and dance performances and constituted the most important function of the whole Shang state. As ancestors proliferated with time, the number of sacrifices grew, and by the end of the Shang period, they became almost daily occurrences. The highest spirit of all was "Shang Di" (上帝 Lord on High) – possibly the generic title for all royal ancestors together. Di received no specific offerings, but was considered the most powerful of all the spirits. The spirits of nature (Yellow River, gods of the clouds, Yue Peak, etc.) were also given offerings to.

- **TODAY'S TAIWAN**

Importance of *Tang Ki*: "*Tang Ki* is a southern Fujienese term for spirit mediums. The term itself actually means ‘divining child’, although in reality the children are often adults. In theory, however, it is a child who is able to establish a connection with the spiritual world."

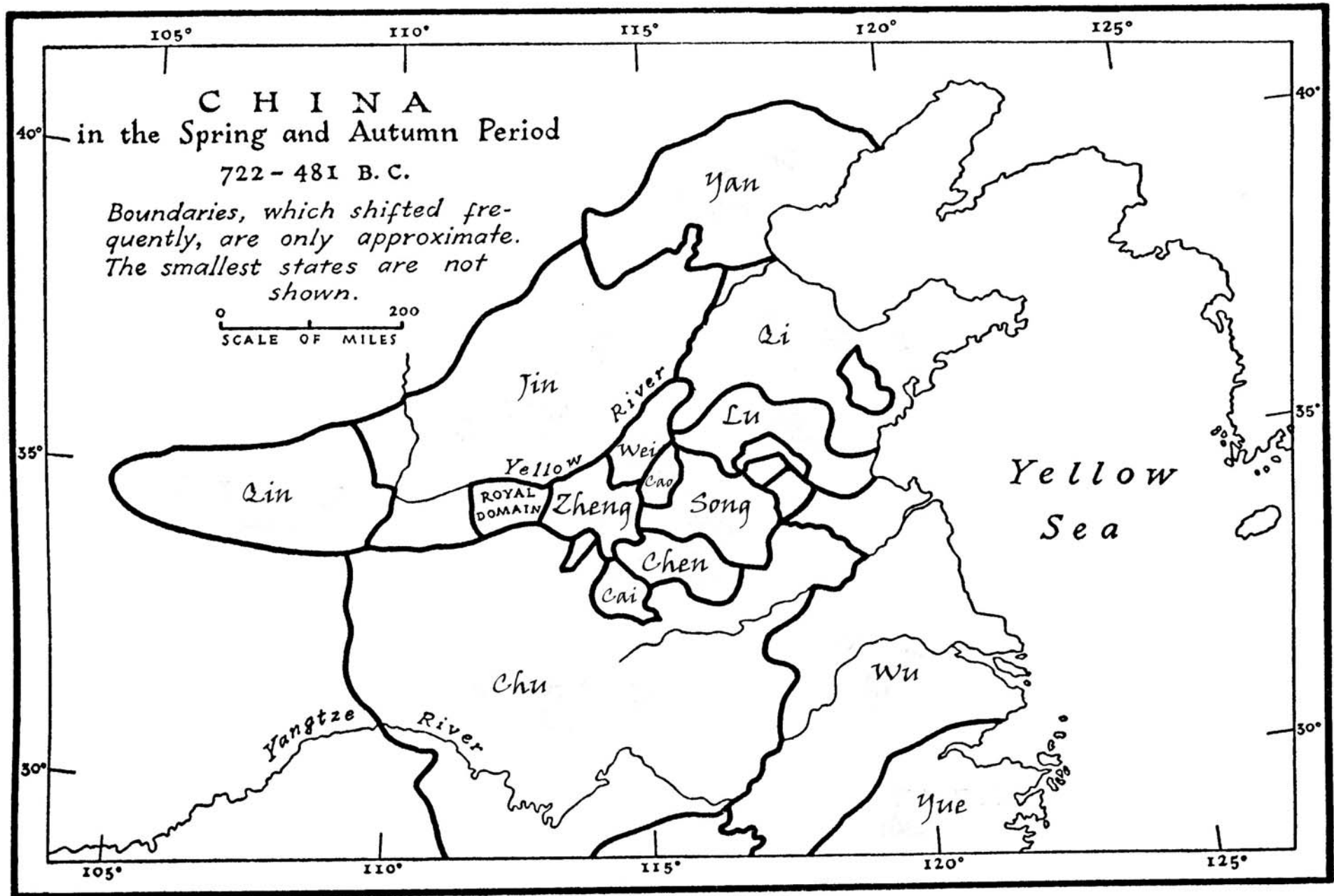
In Taiwan, there are in most communities and certainly in most rural communities one or more *Tang Ki*: people who can speak for the gods when others want to contact them. For example, in a typical Taiwanese fishing village, if someone has a serious problem such as a serious health condition, marital problems, or a financial crisis, they will very often approach a *Tang Ki* for advice about what they should do.

# CONFUCIANISM

EAST1504/4504

UNIT 2.2

# CHINA DURING THE AUTUMN AND SPRING PERIOD



# The Five Confucian Classics

*Yijing* 易经 *Book of Change*

*Shujing* 书经/*Shangshu* 尚书 *Book of Documents*

*Shijing* 诗经 *Book of Songs*

*Liji* 礼记 (*Zhouli* 周礼, *Yili* 仪礼) *Book of Rites*

*Chunqiu* 春秋 *Autumn and Spring Annals*

(*Yuejing* 乐经 *Book of Music*)

# The Four Books (*sishu* 四书)

- Singled out in the Song period (Neo-Confucianism)
- *Analects Lunyu* 论语
- *Mengzi* 孟子
- *Great Learning Daxue* 大学
- *Doctrine of the Mean Zhongyong* 中庸
- The last two probably originating during the late Warring States / early Han (Mencius' tradition) and originally integrated in the text of *Liji*

- These texts are emphasized by Neo-Confucianism since they stress inner cultivation, self-scrutiny, and making oneself good
- *Daxue*: "Wishing to order their own states the sages and noble men regulated their own families; wishing to regulate their own families they first regulated their own persons."  
"Wishing to cultivate their persons they first rectify their hearts; wishing to rectify their hearts, they sought to be sincere (true, without self-perception) in their thoughts."
- Moral *inner* life of the individual!

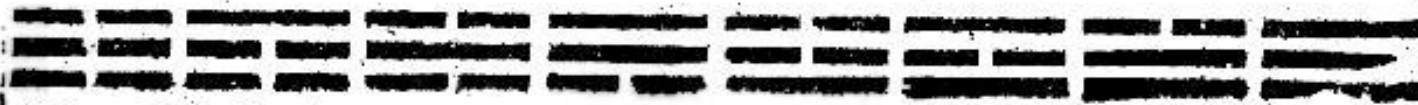


- Doctrine of the Mean tries to provide an ontological base for inner self-realization:  
"Sincerity [undivided self-identity] is the Dao of Heaven. Sincerity is the Dao of men.[...] He who possesses sincerity hits [zhong 中] the mark without effort and obtains [perfection] without thought. He who naturally and easily aligns with the Dao is the sage. He who attains sincerity chooses the good and firmly holds it fast." (Schwartz:405)

# *Yijing* 易经 *Book (Classic) of Change*

- Originally consisting of 8 *trigrams* which can be combined into 64 *hexagrams*

<i>Kun</i>	<i>gen</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>sun</i>	<i>zhen</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>dui</i>	<i>qian</i>
坤 八	艮 七	坎 六	巽 五	震 四	離 三	兌 二	乾 一



## THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS

*qian*

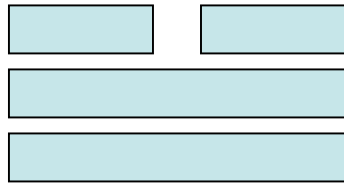


"The creative Heaven", pure masculinity *yang*

*Attributes:* power, strength, creativity

*Direction:* Northwest

*dui*

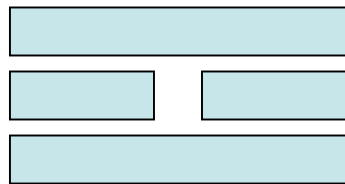


"The pleasant lake", marsh, fog

*Attributes:* joy, pleasure, attraction

*Direction:* West

*li*

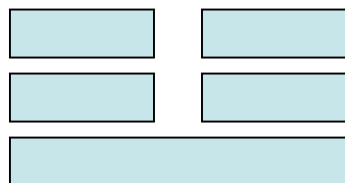


"The persisting sun", fire

*Attributes :* light, radiance

*Direction :* South

*zhen*



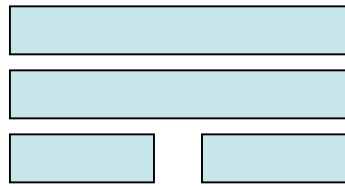
"The initiative-seeking thunder"

*Attributes :* action, initiative, movement

*Direction :* East

## THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS (cont.)

*sun*

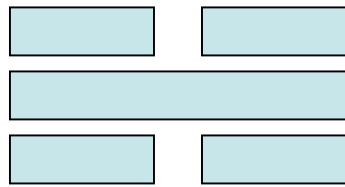


"The gentle wind", tree

*attributes*: following after, pervading

*direction*: Southeast

*kan*

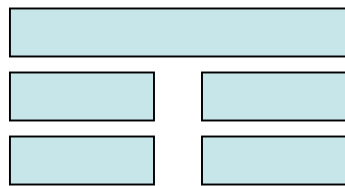


"The deep water", abyss, moon, deep

*attributes*: danger

*direction*: North

*gen*

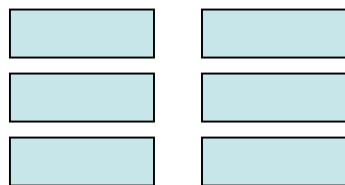


"The mountain which remains unmoved"

*attributes*: quiet, calm, ceasing activity

*direction*: Northeast

*kun*

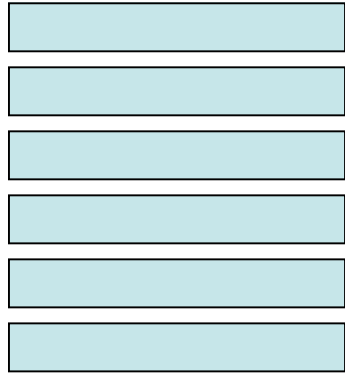


"The receptive earth", absolutely feminine, *Yin* principle

*attributes*: receptive, passive

*direction*: Southwest

- The 8 *trigrams* which combine into the 64 *hexagrams* were a great impetus for Han correlative thinking, explaining the cyclic dynamics of the universe (concordance of directions, colors, feelings, historical change, etc.)
- Originally consisting of the symbols, it is not quite clear when the text parts were combined with the symbols
- Texts parts consisting of a summary of the meaning, "attached verbalizations", and "10 wings" (more general commentaries and correlations, probably dating from the late Warring State period or the early Han; probably Daoist influence)
- Although the original text probably was not related to Confucian, later on the Confucian tradition claimed that it is a work by Confucius



# Example: first hexagram *qian*

## **THE JUDGEMENT**

The Creative works sublime success,  
Furthering through perseverance.

## **THE IMAGE**

The movement of heaven is full of power.  
Thus the superior man makes himself strong and untiring.

## **THE LINES**

Nine (*yang* principle) at the beginning means:

Hidden dragon. Do not act (first period of the creative act, when “the virtues are still not demonstrated”).

Nine in the second place means:

Dragon appearing in the field.

It furthers one to see the great man (the beginning of the creative activity for the sake of “the great man” – king – who appeases the universe).

Nine in the third place means:

All day long the superior man is creatively active.

At nightfall his mind is still beset with cares.

Danger. No blame (even dwelling in the higher position, the superior man is not arrogant, and even if humble he is not flattering. He may be in danger, but remains sincere and humane).

Nine in the fourth place means:

Wavering flight over the depths.

No blame (crisis period when the harmony between the higher and lower is violated).

Nine in the fifth place means:

Flying dragon in the heavens.

It furthers one to see the great man (cosmic and social harmony is restored).

Nine at the top means:

Arrogant dragon will have cause to repent.

When all the lines are nines, it means:

There appears a flight of dragons without heads.

Good fortune (after the creative period is over, the superior man should not arrogantly pursue further action, otherwise he will have to repent his impatience).

## *Shujing* 书经/*Shangshu* 尚书 *Book of Documents*

- Collection of documents starting with the mystical rulers
- Some parts were added later by Confucian scholars during the Han
- Idea that the "mandate of Heaven" (*tianming* 天命) can be revoked in case the ruler does not follow the virtuous *Way*
- Ideal of a ruler who is in harmony with Heaven and everything below Heaven, i.e. the whole world (*tianxia* 天下)
- The ideal ruler avoids war and tries to order and pacify things through his perfected virtue and harmony with the *Way*



# Excerpt from the *tianming* chapter

"In the twelfth month of the first year... Yi Yin sacrificed to the former king, and presented the heir-king reverently before the shrine of his grandfather. All the princes from the domain of the nobles and the royal domain were present; all the officers also, each continuing to discharge his particular duties, were there to receive the orders of the chief minister. Yi Yin then clearly described the complete virtue of the Meritorious Ancestor for the instruction of the young king.

He said, "Oh! of old the former kings of Xia **cultivated earnestly their virtue, and then there were no calamities from Heaven.** The spirits of the hills and rivers alike were all in tranquillity; and the birds and beasts, the fishes and tortoises, all enjoyed their existence according to their nature. But **their descendant did not follow their example, and great Heaven sent down calamities,** employing the agency of our ruler- who was in possession of its favouring appointment. The attack on Xia may be traced to the orgies in Ming Tiao... Our king of Shang brilliantly displayed his sagely prowess; for oppression he substituted his generous gentleness; and the millions of the people gave him their hearts. Now your Majesty is entering on the inheritance of his virtue; -- all depends on how you commence your reign. To set up love, it is for you to love your relations; to set up respect, it is for you to respect your elders. The commencement is in the family and the state....

"Oh! the former king began with careful attention to the bonds that hold men together. **He listened to expostulation, and did not seek to resist it; he conformed to the wisdom of the ancients;** occupying the highest position, he displayed intelligence; occupying an inferior position, he displayed his loyalty; he allowed the good qualities of the men whom he employed and did not seek that they should have every talent....

"He extensively sought out wise men, who should be helpful to you, his descendant and heir. He laid down the punishments for officers, and warned those who were in authority, saying, 'If you dare to have constant dancing in your palaces, and drunken singing in your chambers, -- that is called the fashion of sorcerers; if you dare to see your hearts on wealth and women, and abandon yourselves to wandering about or to the chase, -- that is called the fashion of extravagance; **if you dare to despise sage words, to resist the loyal and upright, to put far from you the aged and virtuous, and to seek the company of...youths, -- that is called the fashion of disorder. Now if a high noble or officer be addicted to one of these three fashions with their ten evil ways, his family will surely come to ruin; if the prince of a country be so addicted, his state will surely come to ruin.** The minister who does not try to correct such vices in the sovereign shall be punished with branding.'...

"Oh! Do you, who now succeeds to the throne, revere these warnings in your person. Think of them! -- sacred counsels of vast importance, admirable words forcibly set forth! The ways of Heaven are not invariable: -- on the good-doer it sends down all blessings, and on the evildoer it sends down all miseries. Do you but be virtuous, be it in small things or in large, and the myriad regions will have cause for rejoicing. If you not be virtuous, be it in large things or in small, it will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple."

# *Chunqiu* 春秋

## Autumn and Spring Annals

- Probably based on a chronicle of the State of Lu 鲁, listing events from 722 to 481BC.
- The text itself is extremely devoid of contents, still it was maintained that it was compiled by Confucius.
- The text is usually read together with one of the three major commentaries which provide a wealth of information and judgements on the historical events (Commentary to the Left Zuo zhuan 左传, Gongyang 公羊 commentary, Guliang 穀梁 commentary)

What were the reasons for the appearance of Confucianism and the many other philosophical schools (*baijia* 百家) during the late Warring States period?

Konfusius  
(551-479 BC)

Kongfuzi 孔夫子

Kongzi 孔子

Kong Qiu 孔丘

Kong Zhongni 孔仲尼

# *Annalects*

## *Lunyu* 论语

- Compiled by disciples of Confucius but some parts are probably later additions
- The book was decisive for the development of philosophical and sociopolitical thought in China
- 20 "books" (chapters) extant

# Confucius and Confucianism

*rujia*

儒家

*rujiao*

儒教

*ruxue*

儒学



# Six major philosophical schools classified during the Han

*Ru* (儒) Konfucianism

*Mo* (墨) Mohism

*Ming* (名) Sophism

*Fa* (法) Legalists

*Dao* (道) Daoism (Taoism)

*Yinyang* (阴阳) Yinyang-schools

# Important concepts of Confucian thought

- The five relations
  - ruler - subject
  - father - son
  - husband - wife
  - older brother - younger brother

# *ren* 仁

- The character is derived from *ren* 人 "person, human being"
- "Humaneness" (the qualities which make a person into a 'human being')
- Other translations: "love", "benevolence", "goodness", "perfect virtue", ...

"proper ritual behaviour"	<i>li</i> 礼
"loyalty, truthfulness"	<i>zhong</i> 忠
"faithfulness"	<i>xin</i> 信
"righteousness, appropriateness"	<i>yi</i> 义
"sympathy"	<i>shu</i> 恕
"virtue"	<i>de</i> 德
"the Way" ("normative sociopolitical order")	<i>dao</i> 道
"the noble person"	<i>junzi</i> 君子
"to study"	<i>xue</i> 学
"joy"	<i>le</i> 乐

- Emphasis on the past since the perfect order was already achieved in the past (Zhou) according to Confucius
- Confucius saw himself as "transmitter" and not as creator
- Emphasis on the relationship between ritual and inner feeling