

**Ancient China**  
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Learning Goals: Students should be able to 1) distinguish between Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism; 2) know something about the historical context of their origins; and 3) recognize applications in Imperial China and in modern life.

Background Chronology:

- Xia dynasty (2205?-1766? B.C.E.) - legendary
- Shang dynasty (1766?-1045 B.C.E.) - oracle bones
- Zhou dynasty (1045-256 B.C.E.)
  - Western Zhou (1045-771 B.C.E.) - King Wen and King Wu
  - Eastern Zhou (770-256 B.C.E.)
    - Spring and Autumn Era (722-481 B.C.E.) - Confucius
    - Warring States Era (403-221 B.C.E.) - Hundred Schools
- Qin dynasty (221-207 B.C.E.) - First Emperor
- Han dynasty (202 B.C.E. - 220 C.E.)
- Era of Division (220-589) - Buddhism becomes popular
- Sui dynasty (581-618)
- Tang dynasty (618-907) - Golden Age of Chinese Poetry
- Song dynasty (960-1279)
- Yuan dynasty (1264-1368) - Mongols; Marco Polo
- Ming dynasty (1368-1644)
- Qing dynasty (1644-1912)

Confucianism

Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) – *Analects*  
Five Main Ideas:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Confucian virtues: *ren* = \_\_\_\_\_

*li* = \_\_\_\_\_

*xiao* = \_\_\_\_\_

*Book of History, Book of Songs [Poetry], Book of Rites, Book of Changes [I Ching], Spring and Autumn Annals*

Five Relationships: ruler/subject, parent/child, husband/wife, older brother/younger brother, friend/friend

Later Confucianists: Mencius, Xunzi [Hsun Tzu]

## Daoism

Laozi [Lao Tzu] (dates?) - *Daodejing* [Tao Te Ching]

What is the “unification of multiplicity”?

And the “resolution of opposition”?

Key Terms: *Dao* [Tao] = \_\_\_\_\_

*Wu-wei* = \_\_\_\_\_

*Yin/yang* = \_\_\_\_\_

Zhuangzi [Chuang Tzu] (4th century B.C.E.)

## Legalism

Han Feizi [Han Fei Tzu] (d. 223 B.C.E.)

What are the “two handles”?

Laws should be: objective, exhaustive, universal, harsh, public

## Summary comparison:

Confucianism - hierarchy, order, social responsibility, morality, activism, service, seriousness

Daoism - individualism, freedom, nonconformity, nature, retirement, wit, mysticism, relaxation

For an on-line translation of the complete *Daodejing* (it's not very long!), see <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/daodejing.html#div-2>