COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

HOUR 2
CONFUCIANISM AS A RELIGION

- Deification of Confucius - statues
- Confucian Temples – honoring Confucius
- Confucius teaching not about deities, spirits, or devotion…
- But gave people meaning & social order for 2000+ years.
CONFUCIANISM AS A RELIGION

Immersed in Folk Religion - Tian: “Heaven”

- All things derived from it.
- More of an impersonal power, than a place.
- Divine force that controls events.
- Cosmic moral principle that defines right/wrong.
- “Mandate from Heaven” guiding idea for early China.
CONFUCIANISM AS A RELIGION

Immersed in Folk Religion – Ancestor Reverence

The dead can influence our lives, so best to treat them with reverence.
CONFUCIANISM AS A RELIGION

Immersed in Folk Religion – Divination

(seeking knowledge through supernatural means)

I-Ching: Book of Changes
CONFUCIANISM AS A RELIGION

“As to a Divine Sage or even a Good Man, far be it from me to make any such claim. As for unvarying effort to learn and unflagging patience in teaching others, those are merits I do not hesitate to claim.”
Have you ever been overwhelmed, trapped by suffering?
CONFUCIANISM QUESTION

Have you ever felt like you’re immersed in chaos?
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?

Based on teachings of “Confucius”
“Confucius” Latinized version of “Kung-Fu-tzu” (Master Kung)
Civil servant, turned teacher. (551-479 BCE)
“The greatest teacher.”

Teaching without thinking is useless, but thinking without education is more dangerous
~ Confucius ~
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?

CHINA BEFORE CONFUCIUS

Country in Order

• Ruled by various dynasties for over 1500 years...

• ~5\textsuperscript{th} Cent. BCE, Zhou (Chou) Dynasty begins to crumble...
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?
OUT OF THE WARRING STATES PERIOD

Fall of Zhou (Chou) Dynasty

- Social anarchy; collapse of the central government.
- Kingdom broken up into many independent states; time of constant war.
- Lasted over 300 years.
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?

The Man:
- Admired glory days of Zhou dynasty
- Noticed the power of tradition to maintaining social order.
- Ideas as a civil servant fell on deaf ears.
- Became a teacher, who later, with his students, began teaching to any in power who would listen.

The Influence:
- Felt himself a failure, since no change in his lifetime.
- Students continued his teachings.
- Teachings became influential in maintaining social stability in China for over 2000 years.

The Teachings
- Create traditions, especially pertaining to who we are in relation to others.
- Pass them along through education.
GROUP

• How do you understand Smith’s metaphor of the eagle that adjusts its wings to the currents of the Five Constant Relationships? (pg 113-114).

• Identify 3 examples of how members of your group have seen in other families, or experienced within their own the family, the type of familial relationships espoused by Confucius’ Five Constant Relationships.
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?

KEY TEACHINGS

Goal: To Be “Chun Tzu”
“Superior Person”, “Ideal Person”

“There are three things constantly on the lips of the gentleman none of which I have succeeded in following: A man of benevolence (ren) never worries; a man of wisdom is never in two minds; a man of courage is never afraid.”

“A noble person covets the reputation of being slow in words but prompt in deed.”
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?
KEY TEACHINGS

How To Be “Chun Tzu”

**Jen (Ren):**
Ultimate virtue; to love others.

“If a man sets his heart on benevolence (ren), he will be free from evil.”

“Do not do unto others what you would not want others to do unto you.”
WHAT IS CONFUCIANISM?

KEY TEACHINGS

How To Be “Chun Tzu”

Li

Proper Conduct & Cultural Practices

1. The Five Constant Relationships
   1. Ruler—subject
   2. Parent—child
   3. Husband—wife
   4. Elder brother—younger brother
   5. Elder friend—younger friend

- Each member in the has certain responsibilities
- Each relationship implies a hierarchy between the two (that should be earned).