

An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy

This comprehensive introduction to early Chinese philosophy covers a range of philosophical traditions which arose during the Spring and Autumn (722–476 BCE) and Warring States (475–221 BCE) periods in China, including Confucianism, Mohism, Daoism and Legalism. It considers concepts, themes and argumentative methods of early Chinese philosophy and follows the development of some ideas in subsequent periods, including the introduction of Buddhism into China. The book examines key issues and debates in early Chinese philosophy, cross-influences between its traditions and interpretations by scholars up to the present day. The discussion draws upon both primary texts and secondary sources, and there are suggestions for further reading. This will be an invaluable guide for all who are interested in the foundations of Chinese philosophy and its richness and continuing relevance.

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For Sophie, Toby and Michael

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Preface

This book covers the different philosophical traditions in early Chinese philosophy, focusing on their concepts, themes, reasoning and argumentative methods. It introduces readers to fundamental ideas in the different traditions, debates among thinkers, cross-influences between traditions, as well as interpretive theories about these ideas, including those of contemporary scholars. The chapters are organised to reflect the chronological development of Chinese philosophies, as far as this is possible. A **List of Dates** is provided at the outset to set out important chronological information about selected thinkers and how they are placed in relation to other thinkers. This list is selective and brief, listing only those thinkers and periods that are discussed in the book. The at-a-glance table should help the reader place thinkers in their historical context in relation to other thinkers. Dates are also included in the text in places where they are integral to the specific point being made.

A short list of **Suggestions for Further Reading** is provided at the end of each chapter. These are the most important primary and secondary sources for a student in Chinese philosophy to be familiar with. A more extended **Bibliography** is included at the end of the book. The items here, set out in two separate lists, *Primary Texts* and *Secondary Sources*, provide a more extended reading list. The **Glossary** at the end of the book is set out in three sections comprising *Texts*, *Names* and *Concepts and Themes*. The lists are alphabetically arranged in *Pinyin* transliteration, and, where possible, an English translation is provided.

It is advisable to read the chapters in the order in which they appear as each chapter builds upon the preceding ones. Chapter One is an important chapter that presents key themes and argumentative methods in Chinese philosophy which are developed in subsequent chapters. Readers might find it beneficial to revisit some of the discussions in Chapter One at appropriate points.

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I conclude the book with a **Postscript** designed to give readers a sense of ongoing studies in Chinese philosophy, as well as to suggest a number of interesting areas for further exploration.

List of Dates (in Chronological Order)

Periods in Chinese History	Thinkers	Dates
Xia dynasty		ca. 2070 BCE–1600 BCE
Shang dynasty		ca. 1600 BCE–1046 BCE
Zhou dynasty		1122 BCE–221 BCE
Spring and Autumn period (<i>Chunqiu</i>)		722 BCE–476 BCE
	Guan Zhong	683 BCE–642 BCE
	Confucius (Kongzi)	551 BCE–479 BCE
	Deng Xi	d. 501 BCE
	Zisi	483? BCE–402? BCE
	Mozi	480? BCE–390? BCE
Warring States period (<i>Zhanguo</i>)		475 BCE–221 BCE
	Gaozi	420? BCE–350 BCE
	Zhuangzi	399? BCE–295? BCE
	Mencius	385? BCE–312? BCE
	Gongsun Long	b. 380? BCE
	Hui Shi	370? BCE–310? BCE
	Yang Zhu	ca. 350 BCE
	Shang Yang	d. 338 BCE
	Shen Dao	350? BCE–275? BCE
	Shen Buhai	d. 337 BCE
	Xunzi	310? BCE–219? BCE
	Zou Yan	305? BCE–240? BCE
	Lü Buwei	291? BCE–235? BCE
	Han Fei	280? BCE–233 BCE
	Li Si	280? BCE–208? BCE
Qin dynasty		221 BCE–206 BCE
Han dynasty		206 BCE–220 CE
	Jia Yi	201 BCE–168? BCE

Periods in Chinese History	Thinkers	Dates
	Dong Zhongshu	195? BCE–115? BCE
	Liu An	180? BCE–122? BCE
	Sima Tan	d. 110 BCE
	Sima Qian	145 BCE–86? BCE
	Ban Biao	3 CE–54 CE
	Ban Gu	32–92
	Ban Zhao	35–100
Three Kingdoms (<i>Sanguo</i>)		220–280
	Wang Bi	226–249
Jin dynasty		260–420
	Guo Xiang	d. 312
	Dao-an	312–385
	Hui Yuan	334–416
	Kumarajiva (<i>Jiumoluoshi</i>)	344–413
	Dao Sheng	360?–434?
Northern Wei dynasty		386–534
Southern and Northern dynasties		420–589
	Bodhidharma	470–543
	Zhi Yi	538–597
	Ji Zang	540–623
	Du Shun	557–640
Sui dynasty		581–618
	Xuan Zang	596–664
	Hong Ren	601–674
	Shen Xiu	605?–706?
Tang dynasty		618–907
	Hui Neng	638–713
	Fa Zang	643–712
	Shen Hui	670–762
	Han Yu	768–824
	Li Ao	d. ca. 844
Five dynasties and Ten Kingdoms		907–960
Song dynasty		960–1260
Yuan dynasty		1271–1368
Ming dynasty		1368–1644
Qing dynasty		1644–1911