

# **INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES: WESTERN VS. EASTERN**

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# Chinese Philosophy of Education: Some Examples



- Hierarchical teacher-student relationship
- Students should respect and obey teachers

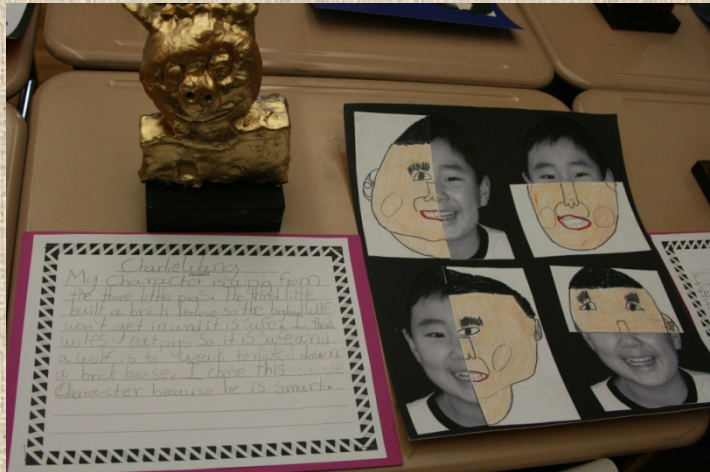
*“Once someone has taught you as a teacher for one day, you should treat him as your father for the rest of your life.” – Ancient Chinese saying*



- Centralized, top-down system
- Uniformity in curriculum
- Teacher-centered pedagogy
- Structured learning; emphasis on learning from texts
- Discipline



# American Philosophy of Education: Some Examples



- Student-centered
- Flexible curriculum and teaching methods
- Project approach
- Emphasis on learning from experience

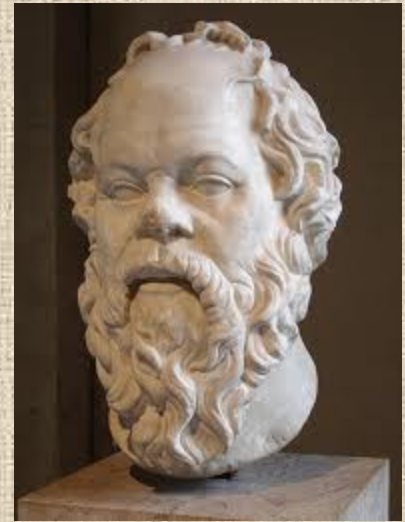
# Five Philosophers

- Socrates and Plato (Greece)  
苏格拉底和柏拉图 (希腊)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau  
(Switzerland/France)  
卢梭 (瑞士/法国)
- John Dewey (U.S.)  
杜威 (美国)
- Confucius (China)  
孔子 (中国)

# Plato and Socrates

## 苏格拉底和柏拉图

- ❑ Plato (427 - 347 BCE) was Socrates' (469 – 399 BCE) student.
- ❑ Socrates did not write anything. Almost all we know about Socrates is from Plato's writings.
- ❑ In 387 BCE (ca.), Plato established the Academy, a school for future statesmen. Plato believed that the road to knowledge lay in exact reasoning, mathematics and geometry.



## Early (Socratic)

*Apology*  
*Charmides*  
*Crito*  
*Euthydemus*  
*Euthyphro*  
*Gorgias*  
*Hippias Major*  
*Hippias Minor*  
*Ion*  
*Laches*  
*Lysis*  
*Menexenus*  
***Meno***  
*Protagoras*

## Middle

*Cratylus*  
*Parmenides*  
*Phaedo*  
*Phaedrus*  
***Republic***  
*Symposium*  
*Theaetetus*

## Late

*Critias*  
*Laws*  
*Philebus*  
*Politicus*  
*Sophist*  
*Timaeus*

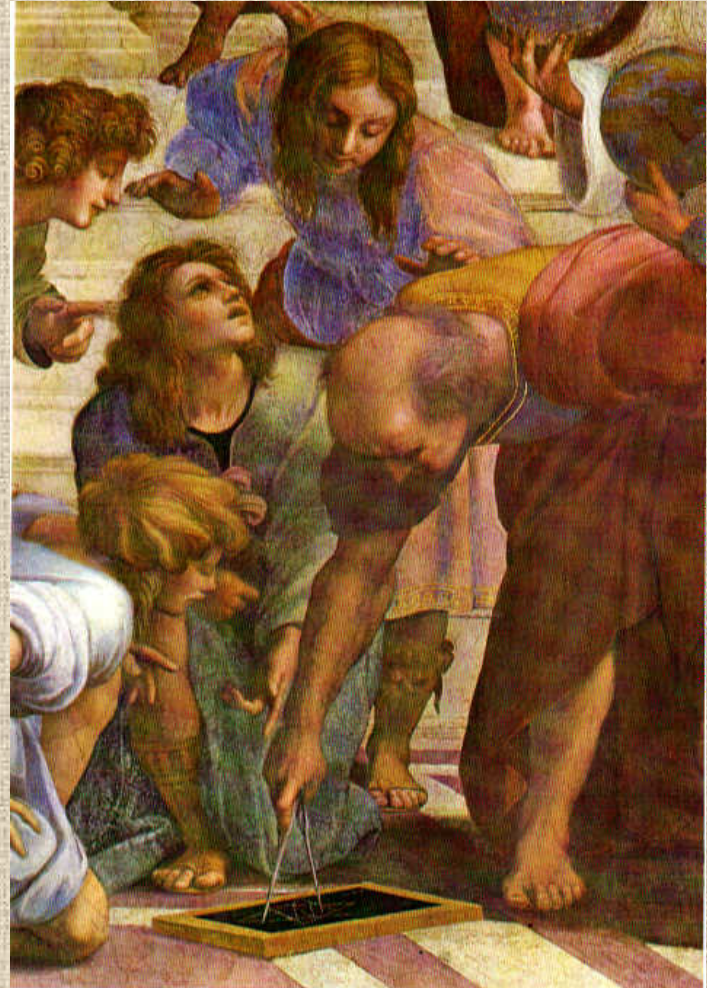
# Plato's *Meno*

- One of Plato's earliest dialogues.
- Central Questions:
  - What is virtue?
  - Can virtue be taught?
  - **How do we learn? Is learning a process of “recollection”?**



# Socratic Method of Teaching

- Demonstration with the Slave Boy



# Basic Characteristics of Socrates' Theory and Teaching Methods :

- ❑ Emphasis on innate ability
- ❑ Teacher's role as a "facilitator"
- ❑ Teacher's responsibility is to find a way to "**pull out**" the knowledge that has already existed in students (i.e. the process of recollection)
- ❑ A good way of teaching is to ask good questions that promote critical thinking

# Jean-Jacques Rousseau

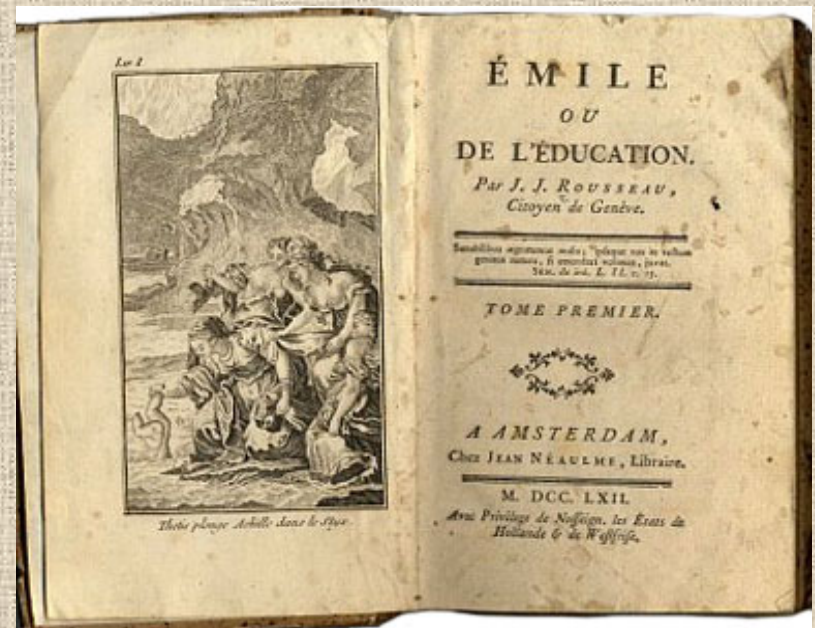
卢梭



- Born in 1712 in Geneva and died in 1778 in Paris.
- An enlightenment thinker and philosopher, and leading figure of the Romantic Movement
- Major works by Rousseau:
  - *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1755)
  - *The Social Contract* (Apr. 1762)
  - ***Emile*** (May, 1762)
  - *The Confessions* (1789)

# Rousseau's *ÉMILE* (爱弥尔)

- ❑ Published in 1762, one month after *The Social Contract*
- ❑ Part novel and part philosophical treatise
- ❑ Divided into five books, covering education of Emile from birth to adulthood



# Central Themes of *Émile*

- ❑ Human beings are good by nature
- ❑ Nature provides the goals of education
- ❑ Children are very different to adults - as innocent, vulnerable, slow to mature - and entitled to freedom and happiness
- ❑ Child should be motivated rather than forced to learn
- ❑ Child has different needs at different stages of life; therefore, education should be tailored to meet those needs at each stage
- ❑ Men and women ought not have the same education since they are essentially different in character and temperament

# Natural Education

- Man is happy and innocent in nature, and it is society that corrupts human nature

*“Everything is good as it comes from the hands of the Maker of the world but degenerates once it gets into the hands of man”* (p. 163).

- Importance of Education

*“Plants are fashioned by cultivation, men by education”* (p. 163).

- Education come from three sources (p. 163):

- Nature
- Men
- Things

**Nature** should determine the course of the other two

# Stages of Child Development

- Education should imitate the natural development of a child's mind, from simple impressions to abstract concepts
  
- Five stages of human development:
  - Stage 1: Infancy (birth to two years)
  - Stage 2: Childhood (two to 12)
    - **“The age of Nature”**
  - Stage 3: Pre-adolescence (12-15)
  - Stage 4: Puberty (15-20)
  - Stage 5: Adulthood (20-25)

# Stage 2: Childhood

- Characteristic of Education at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage:

- **Child-centered**

*“Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking and feeling peculiar to itself: nothing can be more foolish than to seek to substitute our ways for them.”*

- **Negative Education**

*“...the first education should be purely negative. It consists not in teaching virtue and truth, but in preserving the heart from vice and the mind from error. ... In the absence of both prejudices and habits there would be nothing in him to oppose the effects of your teaching and care” (p. 170).*



# Stage 3: Pre-adolescence

- **Focus on intellectual education**

*“After training his body and his sense, we have trained his mind and his judgment” (p.179).*

- **Principle of “discovery learning” (e.g. lost in the woods)**

*“It is not a question of teaching him the sciences, but of giving him a taste for them, and methods of acquiring them when this taste is better developed. This is most certainly a fundamental principle in all good education” (p.175).*

- **Education should be based on child’s own experience rather than on books**

*“I hate books. They only teach us to talk about what we do not know” (p.177). – Only exception: Robinson Crusoe*

# Role of Parents and Tutors

- Be humane

*“Your first duty is to be humane. Love childhood. Look with friendly eyes on its games, its pleasures, its amiable dispositions”* (p. 166).

- Don't force the child to learn; rather, motivate him by creating a desire in him to want to learn

*“Nature made children to be loved and helped, not to be obeyed and feared”* (p. 168).

- Art of teaching

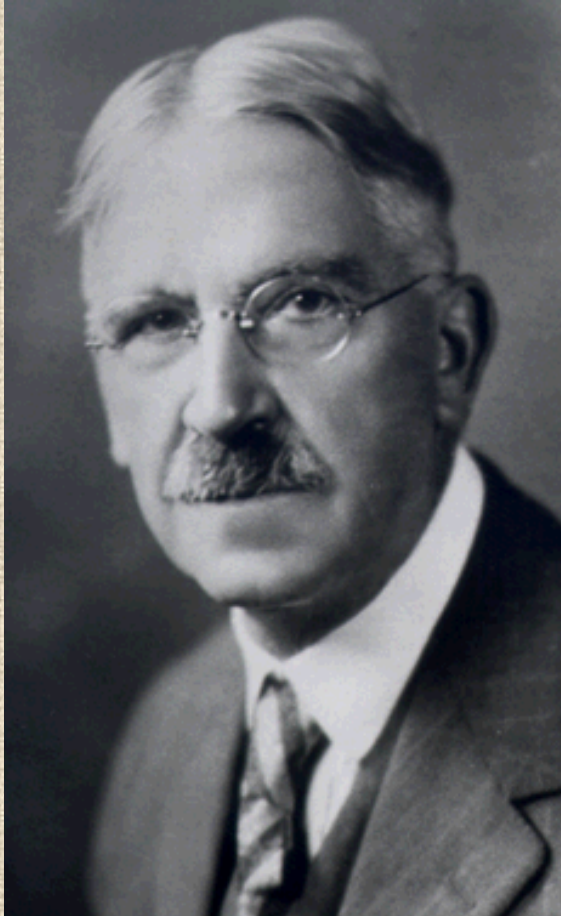
*“Young teacher, I am preaching a difficult art to you, that of governing without percepts and **doing everything by doing nothing**”* (Bloom, 1979, p.119).

# Implications of Rousseau's Educational Thoughts

- ❑ Nature is the first teacher of the child
- ❑ Emphasis of learning by experience and by discovery
- ❑ Education must respect individual pace

# John Dewey

杜威



- ❑ Born on October 20, 1859 in Burlington, Vermont, and died in New York at age 92.
- ❑ American Educator, Pragmatist Philosopher, Psychologist and Social Activist
- ❑ Ph.D. in Philosophy from John Hopkins University; taught at the University of Michigan (1884-1894); University of Chicago (1894-1904); and Columbia University (1905-1930).

# John Dewey's Philosophy of Education

- **“Naturalistic” approach:**

Intellectual heir to Charles Darwin. Children are active, organic beings, have constant interactions with surrounding environment, and developing world, needing freedom and responsibility

- Education starts with the needs and interests of the child, allows the child to participate in planning his/her course of study, employs project method or group learning, depends heavily on experiential learning

- Ideas are not separate from social conditions, philosophy/education has a responsibility to society

# Characteristics of Dewey's Philosophy of Learning

- ❑ **Emphasis on experience**

*“Reading is a harmful substitute for experience, it is all important in interpreting and expanding experience.”*

- John Dewey, *The School and Society*, p.85

- ❑ **Non-authoritarian teaching approaches**

- ❑ **Active learning**

- ❑ **Learning environment**

- ❑ **Learning should have connection to life**

# Dewey on Roles of Student and Teacher

- Students should play an important role in their own education; they must be involved in setting objectives for their own learning
- Teacher should not be the authoritarian but the facilitator. Teacher should encourage, offer suggestions, question and help to plan and implement courses of study. Teacher should have command of several disciplines
- Teacher should adopt **inquiry method** (e.g. asking question), **problem solving**, **integrated curriculum** (e.g. project)

# Dewey's Educational Legacy

- Philosophy of education for U.S.
  - Scientific inquiry-based experimentation (e.g. Chicago Laboratory Schools at University of Chicago)
  - Democratizing principles
- Child-centered education
- Widespread influence around the world
  - Lectured in Japan and China (1919 to 1921); also visited Turkey, Mexico, South Africa, and Russia
  - Translations of Dewey's works into at least 35 languages
  - Thousands of foreign students studied with Dewey at Columbia Teachers College





# Confucius

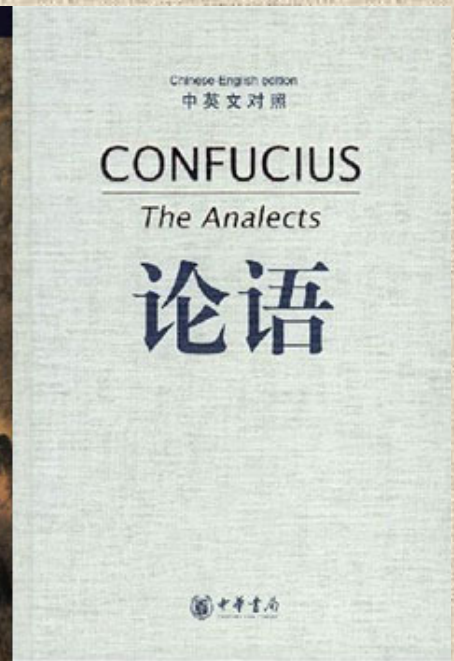
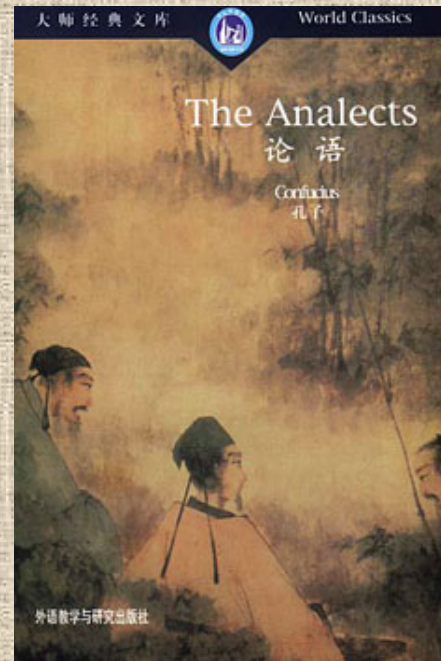
孔子



- ❑ Also called “Kong-fu-tse”; “Master Kong”
- ❑ 551 – 479 BCE (82 years before Socrates), from a noble but impoverished family
- ❑ Chinese philosopher, political thinker and educator
- ❑ Major works by Confucius:
  - *The Analects*
  - *The Great Learning*
  - *The Doctrine of the Mean*

# The *Analects* of Confucius

- ❑ Compiled by Confucius Disciples
- ❑ Divided into 20 books that cover a wide range of topics: politics, philosophy, education and moral cultivation, literature and arts
- ❑ In a conversational style



# Confucius on Education

- Emphasis on the importance of education for achieving **self-perfection and social order**
- Theory of Knowledge
  - *"I wasn't born with innate knowledge. By learning from the ancients, I sought it through diligence."*
- Theory of Teaching and Learning
  - **"Fill-in"** rather than **"Pull-out"**
  - *"Is it not pleasant to learn with constant perseverance and application?"*
  - *"Study without thought is labor lost; thought without study is dangerous."*

# Confucian Learning Virtues

- Sincerity (诚心)
- Diligence (勤奋)
- Endurance of hardship (刻苦)
- Perseverance (恒心)
- Concentration (专心)
- Respect for teachers (尊师)
- Humility (谦虚)

Source: Li, 2012, p.49

# Questions for Discussion:

- How can we learn from each other?
- How can we draw the best practices from different systems?