

Article for English Corner Discussion

1. Article 8 -2: Introduction to Chinese classic texts

(From Wikipedia free encyclopedia)

The Chinese classic texts (古典经文) often refer especially to the Confucian (孔子) “*Four Books and Five Classics* (四書五經)”. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the *Four Books and Five Classics*, chosen and compiled by Song dynasty Zhu Xi (宋朝朱熹), were the subject of mandatory (规定) study by those Confucian scholars who wished to become government officials (政府官员).

I. The Classics of Confucianism (儒学):

1.1 The Four Books (四书):

1. The Great Learning (大学) is a chapter from the *Classic of Rites* (礼记).
2. The Doctrine of the Golden Mean (中庸) is another chapter from the *Classic of Rites* (礼记).
3. The Analects of Confucius, (论语) a twenty-chapter work of dialogues between Confucius and his disciples, recorded by later Confucian scholars.
4. The Mencius, (孟子) a book of conversations between Mencius and some kings of his time.

1.2 The Five Classics (五经):

1. The I Ching (易经) is a manual of divination based on the eight trigrams (八卦), by the time of Confucius these eight trigrams had been multiplied to sixty-four hexagrams (64 卦) attributed to the mythical figure (神话人物) Fuxi (伏羲). The *I Ching* is still used by modern adherents (支持者) of folk religion (民间宗教 – 道教).
2. The Classic of Poetry (诗经) is made up of 305 poems divided into 160 folk songs, 74 minor festal songs, 31 major festal songs, and 40 hymns and eulogies (葬礼颂扬). This book is traditionally credited as a compilation from Confucius.
3. The Classic of Rites (礼记) consists of 49 chapters.

4. The Classic of History (尚书, 史记) is a collection of documents and speeches of the Xia (夏 2100BC – 1600BC), Shang (商 1600BC – 722BC) with 49 chapters..
5 The Spring and Autumn Annals (春秋 722Bc – 481BC), *compiled by Confucius*, is chronologically the earliest annal (年史); consisting of about 16,000 words, it records the events of the State of Lu from 722 BC to 481 BC, with implied condemnation (谴责) of usurpations (篡夺王位), murder, incest (乱伦), etc.

II. Others: Tao Te Ching (道德经), attributed to Laozi (老子).

Zhuangzi (庄子) attributed to the philosopher of the same name, Zhuangzi.

III. The Classics of **Military Science** (军事):

The Art of War (孙子兵法), attributed to Sunzi (孙子).

IV. The Classics of the History of China:

2. Discussions: