A Study of Confucius' Thought on Jen

This academic exercise discusses the "Jen" of Confucius. It comprises of six chapters.

The first chapter explains how and why Confucius and his disciples have always been talking and debating about "Jen" which is almost a name of all virtues. It explains further how Confucius' "Jen" is applicable to such aspects as politics, life, education and religions. All these show that "Jen" is in fact the centre as well as the essence of the Confucian school of thought.

The second chapter explains Confucius' political views from the standpoint of "Jen". "Jen" plays an important role in his political thought which emphasizes morality rather than punishment.

Chapter three elucidates how "Jen" consists in our daily life. To achieve the objective of life, one has to conduct oneself in such a way that whatever one does would adhere to a code of ethics; only then can one become a decorous person who is willing to help others to achieve perfection.

Chapter four points out that in education, Confucius advocates education without discrimination, education in accordance with individual capabilities and a balance of learning and thinking. All these embody the idea of "Jen".

The fifth chapter clarifies Confucius' concept of "Heaven" which refers to a personified and virtuous heaven. He views one's prayers to God or holy ghosts as the continuation of the acts of filial piety. This also serves as a memory of the deceased, the past and gone. The religious aspect of filial piety, and the memory of the past and gone are all based upon "Jen".

Upon the basis of the discussion above, the last chapter concludes the merits and demerits of Confucius' thought on "Jen", and thereby appraises the value and academic standing of the Confucian school of thought.