ABSTRACT

This academic exercise is an attempt to analyse Confucius' political thought as it appeared in his work Analects. Attempts have also been made to analyse Confucius' other aspects of philosophical thoughts in relation to his political thought to foster a better understanding of the real essence of Confucius' political ideas. It is hoped that through an analysis of Confucius' political thought, the misconception that Confucius was a pedantic political thinker would be dispelled.

This exercise is structurally divided into eight chapters. Chapter One begins with the purpose of this study. Chapter Two is a discussion of traditional ideas before Confucius' time and of how these traditional ideas had taken on a new look given by Confucius. Chapter Three to Chapter Six are a comprehensive study of Confucius' political thoughts and their applicability to our present days. In Chapter Three, Confucius' idea of "government by virtue and law" (德主法辅) is examined. Chapter Four discusses Confucius' thought at the "Justification of name" (正名) and its socio-political functions. Chapter Five reveals Confucius' proposition on "livelihood" (养民) as the priority of political policy. Chapter Six examines Confucius' advocacy of "educational universality" (有教无类) as a means to achieve social and political equality. His ideas and methods of education are also discussed. Chapter Seven considers the implicit influence of Confucius' political thoughts on the Enlightenment movement in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. The final Chapter concludes the analysis of Confucius' political thoughts.
From this study, the relevance of Confucius' political thought for modern society is clearly evident.

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