

What is li (禮) ?

1. Protocols for ceremonies and rituals

- Zhu Xi: “Li is the heavenly way which is institutionalised. It refers to the rules of ceremonies conducted by humans.” Commentaries to 1.12 (禮者天理之節文也)
- Rules of ceremonies and rituals dedicated to mountains, rivers or to the ancestors
- King Xun accomplished 5 kinds of ceremonial protocols. 5 kinds of jades, 3 kinds of silk, 2 kinds of live animals and 1 dead animal are used. 禮有五等 (玉, 帛, 酒, 膳, 幣) (4)
- Rules governing rituals and ceremonies conducted in the course of human life 禮 (capping, marriage, funeral, ancestral ceremony)
- Filial love (孝 xiao) means “While your parents are alive, serve them according to Li. When they die, do the funeral according to Li. Then, do the ancestral ceremony according to Li.” (孝者天之經也) (2.5)
- When Confucius paid a visit to the Grand Temple, he asked about various aspects of the Li (禮). Somebody said, “Who said the guy from Qu knows Li? When he entered the Grand Temple, he asked about everything.” Master heard this and said, “This is Li.” (3.15)
- “You love lamb. I love Li.” (吾愛羊，子愛禮) (3.17)
- The Master said, ‘The Li of Xia dynasty, I can talk about it. Regarding the principality of Hui, there isn’t enough evidence. The Li of Yin dynasty, I can talk about it. Regarding the principality of Song, there isn’t enough evidence. Lack of enough documents and learned people is the reason. Sufficient evidence would have enabled me to talk about the Li of those principalities.’ 禮之於我，猶天之於我，不可及也。 (禮, 3.9)

- [illegible]

- Lin Fang asked about the root of Li. The Master said, 'Great question! Regarding Li, you should rather be frugal than lavish. Regarding funeral, you should have a genuine sentiment of mourning rather than nicely decorating the graves. 禮之本節 (禮, 3.4)
- The Master said, "Ceremonial caps should be made of Hemp. That is Li. Nowadays people use silk cap, which is economical. I follow the general trend." 禮之節 (9.3)
- Zi Gong said, "In poverty, yet not be abject; in affluence, yet not be arrogant. How's that?" The Master said, "Possible. But still, it is not as good as being poor yet in delight; being rich yet fond of Li." 貧而樂 (1.15)
- Yan Yuan died. Yan Lu inquired whether the Master could sell his carriage to pay for the outer coffin. The Master said, 'This is not about money. It is about one's son. When Li(子) died, he was buried in a coffin without an outer coffin. I did not go on foot in order to have the outer coffin. As I am in the train of dignataries, I could not go on foot.' (Lunyu, 11.8)
- The Master said, "If substance overshadows erudition, you become vulgar. If erudition overshadows substance, you become bookish. Only when substance and erudition complement each other, will you become a noble person. 文質彬彬 (6.18)
- Zhu Xi's commentary on 文: "When the way manifests itself, we call it wen (文). The entirety of Li and Music are also called 文 (sophisticated culture)." (禮記集說 卷四)" 文, 9.5. 文 can also mean books.
- The Master said, 'The Zhou dynasty modelled itself upon the two preceding ones. What a splendid civilisation (周)! I follow Zhou.' 周之於禮 (禮, 3.14)
- The Master said, "You may have superb talents like the Duke of Zhou. But if you are arrogant and stingy, the rest of you is not worth looking at." 子夏問曰 (禮記集說 卷四)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

- Lord Ji Kang Zi (grand-son of Ji Ping Zi) asked, “What should I do to encourage people to be respectful and loyal?” The Master said, “Face them with splendour, they will be respectful. Serve the parents and treat the little ones with compassion, they will be loyal. Take the good examples to teach the lackeys, that is to encourage.”

[illegible]

Also see 15.33.

- Zi Xia asked, " 'Enchanting smile, revealing the dimples; Beautiful eyes, with dark iris; Plain white, making patterns colourful.' What does that mean?" The Master said, "Painting is to be done on white." Zi Xia said, "Li comes afterwards, you mean?" The Master said, "You move me, Shang (上; Zi Xia)! Now we can talk poetry together." (3.8)

4. Code of conduct; rules of ethics regulating the behaviour



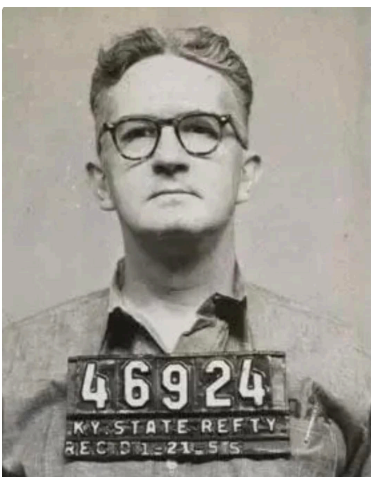
김재규(Kim Jae Kyu)



Majid Kavousifar



유관순(Yoo Gwan Soon)



Carl Braden

- Li, Li! Do you think I am talking about jade and silk?
Music, music! Do you think I am talking about bells and drums?

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ (□□, 17.11)

- The Master said, “Bowling must be done before going up to the hall. That is Li. These days, bowling is done after climbing on the hall, which is arrogant. Against the general trend, I bow before going up the hall.” 射也。先王之道，自東夷而來，而莫之改易。射必先設楹，然後升階，升堂，然後射。今人反是，先升堂，後射，此其大惑者也。射者，先王之道也，而自東夷始，莫之能復也。吾欲先王之道，不可及也，乃欲射，則先設楹，然後升堂，然後射。此其大惑者也。射者，先王之道也，而自東夷始，莫之能復也。吾欲先王之道，不可及也，乃欲射，則先設楹，然後升堂，然後射。此其大惑者也。(9.3)
- The Master said, “When modesty is not grounded on Li, it becomes slavish; when cautiousness is not grounded on Li, it becomes cowardly; when courage is not grounded on Li, it becomes disruptive; when honesty is not grounded on Li, it becomes a snare. ” 謙而不衷，則褻；戰而不嚴，則怯；勇而不剛，則亂；直而不和，則撓。(8.2)
- If your politeness is close to Li, you can avoid humiliation. 禮近於齊，可以免恥。(1.13)
- The Master said, “If it is against Li, do not look, do not listen, do not talk, do not move.” 非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動。(12.1)
- The Master said, “When a noble man broadly learns civilisations and constrains himself with Li, he would not cross the line.” 博學之，審問之，慎思之，明辨之，篤行之。有弗學，學之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之。博學之，審問之，慎思之，明辨之，篤行之。有弗學，學之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之。(6.27) (12.15)
- Yan Yuan said, “... The Master effortlessly, naturally guide people. He broadens me with learning and he constrains me with Li ... ” 夫子循循然，以教我，用我，無所不周。博學之，審問之，慎思之，明辨之，篤行之。有弗學，學之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之；有弗知，知之；有弗能，能之。(9.11)
- The Master said, “A noble man would have righteousness as his base. His behaviour will be in accordance with Li. He asserts himself politely. He completes his project reliably. Such is a noble man!” 君子居則遷，行則化。唯仁為己立，唯義為己用，唯禮為己節，唯智為己利。君子居則遷，行則化。唯仁為己立，唯義為己用，唯禮為己節，唯智為己利。(15.18)

5. What are we bound by? Li (李) or Xing (邢)?

- Does law bind us? Why?
- The Master said, “Noble persons know well what is right, the petty and the lowly know well what is beneficial.” □

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ (4.16)

- J-J Rousseau, [Du contrat social](#), (Liv. 1, Ch. 3, On the law of the strongest; Du droit du plus fort)
- “The force is a physical power; I do not see what morality can result from its effects. To give in to the force is an act of necessity, not of volition; it is at most an act of prudence. In what sense can it be a duty? (La force est une puissance physique; je ne vois point quelle moralité peut résulter de ses effets. Céder à la force est un acte de nécessité, non de volonté ; c’est tout au plus un acte de prudence. En quel sens pourra-ce être un devoir? ...)
- However, what is a law which perishes when the force stops. If one has to obey because of force, [that means] one does not need to obey because of duty; and if one is no longer forced to obey, one is no longer obliged to obey. You see that this word law adds nothing to the force. It has no meaning at all here. (Or, qu’est-ce qu’un droit qui périt quand la force cesse ? S’il faut obéir par force, on n’a pas besoin d’obéir par devoir ; et si l’on n’est plus forcé d’obéir, on n’y est plus obligé. On voit donc que ce mot de droit n’ajoute rien à la force ; il ne signifie ici rien du tout....)
- Let us therefore agree that the force does not make law and that one only has an obligation to obey the legitimate powers and nothing else. (Convenons donc que force ne fait pas droit, et qu’on n’est obligé d’obéir qu’aux puissances légitimes.”)
- The Master spoke of Gong Ye Chang (公冶長): “He is marriageable. Although he was imprisoned, it was not his fault.” The Master gave his daughter to him in marriage. 公冶長字子長，齊公冶氏之長子也。公冶氏，齊之采姓。公冶長，字子長，齊公冶氏之長子也。公冶長，字子長，齊公冶氏之長子也。(論語 5.1)
- The Master said, “A noble man’s standard is the whole world: nothing is correct, nothing is incorrect. Rightness goes with him.” 子曰：「天下之無正，無不正也。自當其正，自當其不正也。」(論語 4.10)
- Zi Gong asked, “If a person is liked by everyone in the

[illegible]

- Scrates, Apologia, 39 : For neither in a trial nor in battle is it right that I or any one else should employ every possible means whereby he may avoid death; for in battle it is frequently evident that a man might escape death by laying down his arms, and throwing himself on the mercy of his pursuers. And there are many other devices in every danger, by which to avoid death, if a man dares to do and say every thing. But this is not difficult, O Athenians! to escape death; but it is much more difficult to avoid depravity, for it runs swifter than death. And now I, being slow and aged, am overtaken by the slower of the two; but my accusers, being strong and active, have been overtaken by the swifter, wickedness. And now I depart, condemned by you to death; but they condemned by truth, as guilty of iniquity and injustice: and I abide my sentence, and so do they. These things, perhaps, ought so to be, and I think that they are for the best.
- Joseph Raz, "[The Obligation to Obey: Revision and Tradition Opens in a new window](#)", 1 Notre Dame J.L. Ethics & Pub. Pol'y 139 (1985)
 - "If there is a general obligation to obey the law, it exists because it was voluntarily undertaken."

6. Punishment (刑) v. Li (禮) , “rule of law”?

- The Master said, 'Govern people with politics and align them with punishments, they will evade and have no

shame. Govern them with virtue and align them with Li they will have decency and things will be in the right place.'

(□□, 2.3)

- If names are not correct, the speech will be convoluted. If the speech is convoluted, tasks cannot be accomplished. If tasks are not accomplished, the Li and the Music will not flourish. If the Li and the Music do not flourish, punishments will be improperly administered. If punishments are improperly administered, people would not know where to stand. 名不實則言不順，言不順則事不成，事不成則禮樂不興，禮樂不興則刑罰不中，刑罰不中則民不知所歸。 (Lü, 13.3)
- Duke Ai asked, "What should I do to make people obey?" Confucius replied, "If you promote the upright to grind out the crooked, people will obey. If you promote the crooked to grind out the upright, people will not obey." 子夏曰：「魯有初。」 (Lü 2.19) (also see Lü 12.22) 礪=cù (grinding stone), cuò (to remove, to dismiss)
- The Master said, "A noble man reflects upon virtue; the petty and the lowly reflect upon land. A noble man reflects upon punishment; the petty and the lowly reflect upon gift." 子曰：「君子居則思道，小人居則思地。君子居則思刑，小人居則思貨。」 (Lü 4.11)
- Li does not reach down to the ordinary people. Punishments do not reach up to the magnates. (Li Ji) 禮不下庶人，刑不上大夫。 (Lü, Lü 68) See Liu Yucai and Luke Habberstad, "The Life of a Text: a brief history of the Liji 禮記 and its transmission", Journal of Chinese Literature and Culture 1:1-2 (2014).
- It was about that time that Confucius executed a magnate (大夫) Shao Zheng Mao for disrupting the politics. When the news of this manner of governing got around and three months have gone by, merchants selling mutton and porc were not inflating the price, men and women used different sides of the street, lost items remained untouched and visitors from everywhere got what they

