

---

# Character Education: From the Perspective of Confucian Ethics

**Kuangfei Xie**

Humanity and Politics Department of Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, NanJing, China

**Email address:**

43806885@qq.com, 09110010012@fudan.edu.cn

**To cite this article:**

Kuangfei Xie. Character Education: From the Perspective of Confucian Ethics. *Education Journal*. Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, pp. 1-6.

doi: 10.11648/j.edu.20160501.11

---

**Abstract:** The crisis of modern character education is caused largely by the crisis of modernity. A series of campaigns of modernity against morality have posed a serious threat to moral education of the schools on the whole, including the character education. Characters are not just about making the right moral decisions. Without the proper and comprehensive character education, we can only have the soulless excellence of moral education, which can only produce the hollow people. With regard to the deep crisis of modern character education, Confucian ethics has provided us with a great many insightful and fundamental ideas about how to overcome the crisis, such as teaching the characters on the basis of practical moral wisdom, focusing on the practical meaning of learning in the process of character education, and emphasizing the importance of the life-long character education for all moral agents. Above all, Confucianism places great emphasis on the value of surpassing the weakness of will by the constant and virtuous practice of the characters.

**Keywords:** Character Education, Confucian Ethics, Characters

---

## 1. Introduction

Character education is, undoubtedly, the essence and soul of education. However, most of the modern schools, nowadays, focus mainly on the teaching of the abstract knowledge and the practical skills, entirely marginalizing or even completely ignoring the significance and meaning of the character education. "Character education is based on the idea that there are traits of character children ought to know, that they learn these by example, and that once they know them, they need to practice them until they become second nature." [1] As a practical, particular approach to moral education, character education can trace its fundamental roots to the traditional, ancient and time-honored virtue wisdom, which can either be Confucian Ethics wisdom or Aristotelian virtue ethics wisdom or other great wisdom originated from other cultures." In contrast to views that emphasize reasoning, problem solving, and critical thinking, character education concentrates on the development of virtues" [2] As a matter of fact, character education is supposed to be deeply rooted into the solid foundation of the virtue tradition, otherwise, it would be degenerated and degraded into the rootless preaching. Since character plays an essential role in one's life-long happiness and well-being, character education naturally constitutes the

essence of modern education. In fact, character is to the soul as pillars to buildings or roots to trees, without which the trees of life will wither and even be corrupted. The three essential harmonies, namely, the harmony between man and nature, the harmony between man and other people, as well as the harmony between man and his innermost self, can only be based on the sound characters and the sound character education. [3] There are two fundamental dimensions about character education, one is the personal or individual dimension, and the other is the collective or social dimension. After all, none of us can survive if he or she is entirely isolated from social community. "In morals, we need not expect startling innovations: Despite the interesting adventures of Sophists and Nietzscheans, all moral conceptions revolve about the good of the whole. Life in society requires the concession of some part of the individual's sovereignty to the common order." [3] (p34) In this sense, the proper character education can not go to the extremes. The wise and proper character education is the proper combination of social moral education and the private virtuous education. On the one hand, character education is supposed to contribute greatly to the important socialization process of the individuals; on the other

hand, character education plays its indispensable and essential role in shaping or reshaping the personal virtues of the virtuous agents that constitute the fundamental basis of the inner peace and tranquility. Stability and diversity, or identity and socialization are indeed internally complementary. Even though "Social cohesion and individual liberty, like religion and science, are in a state of conflict or uneasy compromise throughout the whole period", [4] it is still possible for us keep a proper balance between the general need of social cohesion and the personal need for the individual perfection. To attain thus seemingly impossible mission, necessary compromises have to be made on both sides. After all, while maintaining the steady principles of virtues and characters, we also need to develop the flexible practical wisdom when we realistically live the moral life in the imperfect social reality consisting of the imperfect people. "We must neither assume a standard of virtue which is above ordinary persons, nor an education which is exceptionally favored by nature and circumstance." [3] (p36) Inevitably and unavoidably, the traditional characters or virtues have to experience the necessary modern process of democratization so that the originally elite characters or virtues can be understood and practiced by the general public. And this is precisely what the traditional Confucian Ethics aimed at.

## 2. The Crisis of Modern Character Education and the Crisis of Modernity

Undoubtedly, a series of campaigns of modernity against morality have posed a serious threat to moral education of the schools on the whole, including the character education. With the irreversible development of the globalization and the amazing development of modern science and technology, the contemporary character education has undergone a radical transformation. When the "man era" was replaced by the "machine era" or the "computer era", and when the traditional, sincere, vigorous character education was taken the place of by the rationalistic, objective, detached "values clarification" or "the so-called "decision making" approach, the character education had become alienated and dehumanized, and even worse, heartless and cold-blooded, which could only produce the professionally excellent, but virtuously hollow students. Virtues can, and ought to be taught, consistently and persistently, in the schools. Instead of the "transvaluation of the values", [5] we need to sincerely and resolutely transmit the true virtues and values that have been handed down from one generation to another. Man is something to be constantly improved, both mentally and spiritually. The non-judgmental moral education is, in essence, the empty and even false moral education. Without the good examples of characters and virtues, the young students would get confused and puzzled about who they are and what they ought to be.

### 2.1. Characters and Moral Decisions

Characters are both universal and unique. In spite of the fact

that the core meaning of each specific character is similar, every individual embodies the character in his own way, at least in part. Therefore, character education is also supposed to be based on the specific cultural background. It takes more than the cognitive capacity to make the proper moral decisions when the virtue agents are faced with the increasingly complicated moral situations. Character education is a broad concept that includes many specific traditions of character education, such as the American character education and the Chinese character education. Unfortunately, it has always been misunderstood that the American character education, with its emphasis upon stories and the western ethics tradition, represents the whole picture of character education. Moral reasoning and moral decisions alone can not possibly fulfill the mission of inculcating the essential characters, such as honesty, integrity, prudence, temperance, into the hearts of the young people. Moreover, making the right and appropriate moral decisions is only the first step towards the significant practice of the specific virtues. What matters most in motivating the virtue agents to act virtuously is the practical moral wisdom and the profound virtuous emotions. After all, the traditional core virtues constitute the fundamental basis of the sound character education. Due to the lack or depriving of the essential character educations, the empty, anxious and despairing, helpless feelings begin to accumulate correspondingly, resulting in the horrible crisis of identity. Most of the social problems, such as the increase of juvenile delinquency, are just the external signs of the internal value conflicts and confrontations caused by the deliberate deprivation of the solid and substantial, essential character education in schools and even in the families. The "decision making" approach to moral education turns out to be a disillusionment, if not a disaster. The consistent, virtuous life based on the sound characters, essentially speaking, is not decided once and for all, but is consciously and meaningfully lived by the virtuous agents themselves.

### 2.2. Who Am I? Identity and Character

What is the major, inner problem of the modern moral education? When we look beneath the outward prosperity and flourishing of the modern moral education for the genuine and feasible salvation of the morality crisis, we will surely and definitely find that the identity crisis among the contemporary young people caused by the lack of the solid characters is the vitally crucial reason. The establishment of the sound and sustainable self-identity is based on the truly effective and enlightening character education, since, according to the doctrines of Confucianism ethics, "It is rare for a man whose character is such that he is good as a son and obedient as a young man to have the inclination to transgress against his superiors; it is unheard of for one who has no such inclination to be inclined to start a rebellion. The gentleman devotes his efforts to the roots, for once the roots are established, the Way will grow therefrom. Being good as a son and obedient as a young man is, perhaps, the root of a man's character." [6] (p3) Identity is largely determined by the characters. Owing to the lack of the solid characters, the moral agents can neither love

themselves nor love others. Building the essential characters by character education is never merely a nostalgic yearning for the ancient world that has been gone with the wind. By constructing the identity in the background of modernity, we can not only restore the fundamental confidence in the eternal values of the traditional virtues, but also lay the sound and solid virtuous foundation for a better and more harmonious modern world in which we live.

The highest value for character education is not the reason or rationality, which has almost dominated the mainstream thoughts of the modern moral education. The virtuous emotions or the healthy moral emotions are the genuine mental foundation of both the moral decisions and moral behaviours. It is a real shame that the emotional dimension of character education has been marginalized or even entirely neglected by the modern schools.

### ***2.3. The Heartless Moral Education Can Only Produce the Hollow People***

Human nature, rather than human reason ultimately determines the virtuous direction of the virtuous agents. Basically speaking, there are two misleading interpretations or two serious misunderstandings about the emotions as well as the role the emotions play in the process of the formation of characters. One is that the emotions are totally insignificant in influencing the characters. What matters most is undoubtedly the moral reasoning. The other is that emotions play a leading and absolutely dominant role in determining what the characters are and the moral rationalization has nothing to do with the characters. Both of the two extreme perspectives concerning the moral emotions are misleading and even detrimental. Moral emotions are the emotions that have been combined with practical wisdom. Even though the moral emotions are deeply rooted into human feelings or human nature, the moral emotions involve more than the spontaneous feelings or the impulsive good inclinations. The place which moral emotions have occupied in our virtuous life can be comparable to that of heart to our life. One of the fundamental ideas of Mencius' philosophy, also one of the basic emotional preconditions of Confucian ethics is that "The nature of man is originally good", which vividly illustrates the role that the originally good moral emotions plays in our moral life. [7] The moderation of the moral emotions makes it possible for us to be both psychologically and emotionally constituted to make the proper moral decisions and stick to the moral principles or live up to the fundamental virtues in spite of the possible adverse circumstances. In this sense, the lack of the education of moral emotions in the process of character education has essentially paralyzed the real character education. After all, eventually and ultimately, whether the virtuous agent can do the virtuous things on the basis of characters lies not in the objective moral situations, but in himself, especially in his emotional disposition.

## **3. The Fundamental Perspectives of Confucian Ethics with Regard to Character Education**

The sacred and eternal characters, such as kindness, benevolence, temperance, tolerance, faith have been deeply rooted into the long-accepted Confucian ethics tradition. There is no doubt that the substantial character education or the inculcation of traditional virtues has always been characteristic of Confucian ethics and practice. In other words, the most significant function or the essential mission of Confucian ethics is to cultivate the virtuous gentleman. "Confucianism underlined, and perhaps to a smaller extent continues to underline, the basic structure of society and community, to orient the life of the people and to define their moral standards and ethical ideal in most parts of East Asia." [8] "Confucianism was essentially a system of ethics (Needham, 1970: 24-5)"; "What is called in the west 'Confucianism' is traditional view of life and code manner of the Chinese gentry" (Zaehner, 1988: 370), and Confucianism should be viewed only as "a set of behavioral patterns". [9] As a matter of fact, Confucianism is more than just a list of the specific virtues, above all, it contains the systematic, effective, and comprehensive approaches to character education, which can provide us with the unlimited ancient wisdom about how to really carry out the modern character education.

### ***3.1. Characters Should Be Taught and Practiced on the Basis of Practical Moral Wisdom***

One of the essential key words of Confucianism ethics is definitely the word: learning. In fact, the very first sentence of the first chapter of Confucian Analects is: "The master said, 'Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application?'" [10] The fundamental meanings of learning in the context of the ancient Chinese Philosophy are dramatically different from the basic meanings of the commonly used word 'study' in the modern era. It is quite interesting to note that both Socrates and Confucius employed the illustrative dialogue to indirectly and wisely teach characters. The most certain way to help the students attain the traditional virtues is through the inspiring and enlightening practice of spontaneous conversations between the teachers and students according to the corresponding and specific life situations. For Confucius, knowledge and virtue were far from being the same thing. There is a huge gulf between what one virtuously knows and what one virtuously does. It takes the consistent virtuous learning to bridge the gap between the knowing of virtues and the practicing of virtues. As Confucius said, "At first, my way with men was to hear their words, and give them credit for their conduct. Now my way is to hear their words, and look at their conduct." [10] (p42) It is the proper combination of the virtuous knowledge, virtuous emotions, and the exercise of virtuous will that essentially motivates the virtuous agents to behave virtuously. From the perspective of Confucianism, the essential meaning of learning is to learn to be a genuinely and authentically virtuous person. Similarly, the essential meaning

of teaching or educating is to teach the students to be virtuous and moral. Man was not born to be a man. Man was morally educated to be a whole man. Therefore, it is commonly acknowledged that Confucianism ethics attaches importance to the holistic view of a person. Fundamentally speaking, there are two essential dimensions of the learning when it comes to the learning from the perspective of Confucianism. One is to learn the tangible knowledge and skills, and the other is to learn how to be a man, a genuinely virtuous person and practice the virtues consistently.

### ***3.2. The Compensatory Effects of Learning and Teaching upon the Cultivation of Characters***

Man can not build his own characters alone. Likewise, no one can depend entirely on himself for the moral perfection. Without the proper guidance and help from the character education, man would remain to be incomplete. According to Confucius, "By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart." [10] (p184) Even though the characters or virtues are not merely the social moral demands imposed from the authoritative teachers or parents upon the individual, the formation process of characters and virtues can never be isolated from the guidance and teachings of both the teachers and parents. Since individuality is not an abstract conception, the genuine individuality and even the whole ethical life can only be found in all kinds of ethical relationships. It takes the constant moral learning to learn to get along well with others, both morally and spiritually. The specific virtues can not exist independently. Without the proper teaching and guidance, the virtuous agents would be extremely confused about how to make the wise moral decisions in the complicated moral dilemma situations. As Confucius said, "There is the love of being benevolent without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to a foolish simplicity. There is the love of knowing without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to dissipation of mind. There is the love of being sincere without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to an injurious disregard of consequences. There is the love of straight-forwardness without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to rudeness. There is the love of boldness without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to insubordination. There is the love of firmness without the love of learning; the beclouding here leads to extravagant conduct." [10] (p188) Characters are never the unchangeable and mechanical state of mind. In fact, characters or virtues are the ongoing process of self-improvement or self-perfection in the virtuous sense. Learning is the indispensable factor that essentially determines the existence and improvement of all characters.

### ***3.3. Life-Long Character Educations for All Moral Agents***

Certain fundamental educational principles are characteristic of Confucianism ethics concerning character education. It has been commonly misunderstood that character education is only intended to help the young people. According to The Zhou Book of Change, "Heaven moves

constantly, likewise, the morally superior man makes unceasing efforts to improve himself." [11] As long as one is alive, he is not supposed to cease the efforts to morally and spiritually improve himself. In spite of the fact that the young people have been acquainted with all the specific virtues because of the character education they have received in the schools, they will gradually forget about them and even begin to doubt the values of the characters after they go into the complicated society that is full of moral dilemmas. In addition, the morally strong social community is also what is needed for the sustainable growth of the characters. In order to overcome the chaotic and even nihilistic trend of the modern society, we need to restore the traditional character education in the social community. According to Confucius, "It is virtuous manners which constitute the excellence of a neighborhood. If a man in selecting a residence, do not fix on one where such prevail, how can he be wise?" [10] (p31) Without the general character education, the virtuous neighborhood would not appear, either.

As a matter of fact, the essential meaning of life-long character education is illustratively captured in a quotation from Confucius himself, "At fifteen, I had my mind bent on learning. At thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right." [10] (p13) Any specific virtue or character has to be tested and proven by the practical life. Without the constant practical life experiences, it would be virtually impossible for the virtuous agents to internalize and eventually attain the characters.

### ***3.4. The Teaching Art of Character Education: The Moral Horizon of Confucian Ethics***

Each virtuous agent is unique in his own way, therefore, no specific method of teaching in character education can be applied to all. As one of Confucius's most outstanding students, Yen Yuan, said, "In admiration of the Master's doctrines, he sighed and said, 'I looked up to them, and they seemed to become more high; I tried to penetrate them, and they seemed to become morally firm; I looked at them before me, and suddenly they seemed to be behind. The master, by orderly method, skillfully leads men on. He enlarged my mind with learning, and taught me the restraints of propriety.'" [10] (p86) The teaching art, undoubtedly, matters a lot in character education. There are two extremes that should be warned against, according to the theologian Paul Tillich, when we practice the principles of character education. One is the selfishness, alienation, and meaningless that result from extreme individualism, and the other extreme is the loss of self and fanaticism that arise in totalitarian communities. [12] The art of teaching plays a leading role in keeping the proper balance between the possible two extremes of character education. The overemphasis on the tolerance during the practice of character education can actually lead to the moral relativism or the actual deprivation of it, while the absolute authority of the teachers in the practice of character education can result in the students' indifference or even hatred towards

the character education. The tendency of the character education that emphasized the dominant role of the teachers in the process of the teaching characters has largely led to the decline of the effectiveness of character education. The feeling of powerlessness and individual insignificance caused by the authoritative style of character education makes the character education lose at least part of its beauty and attractive power to the young people. Characters can not and should not be imposed upon the moral agents like a social obligation or a necessary burden. Likewise, character education should not be carried out in an authoritative and one-dimensional manner.

#### **4. Surpass the Weakness of Will in the Process of Character Education: Practical Wisdom of Confucian Ethics**

Essentially speaking, the lack of characters is not caused by the lack of knowledge concerning characters, but by the lack of the virtuous will in practicing the characters. It takes the substantial practical wisdom to bridge the gulf between what we morally know and what we virtuously do. According to Confucius, we are supposed to pay enough attention to the gap or gulf between the names of characters and the reality of characters, or the discrepancy between the mere language of virtues and the actions of characters." When names are not correct, what is said will not sound reasonable; when what is said does not sound reasonable, affairs will not culminate in success; when affairs do not culminate in success, rites and music will not flourish; when rites and music do not flourish, punishments will not be exactly right; when punishments are not exactly right, the common people will not know where to put hand and foot. Thus when the gentleman names something, the name is sure to be usable in speech, and when he says something this is sure to be practical. The thing about the gentleman is that he is anything but casual where speech is concerned." [6] (p227) In some sense, the purpose of character education, in terms of Confucian ethics, is the "rectification of names". For instance, the names of the five essential characters, that is, humanity, righteousness, ritual, wisdom, and faithfulness are supposed to be internalized by the virtuous agents. In general, Confucianism ethics throws light on the essential moral issue of how to turn the virtuous knowledge into the corresponding virtuous actions.

##### **4.1. The Impoverishment of Character Education: The Weakness of Moral Will**

A wide variety of complicated factors have contributed to the lack of effectiveness of the contemporary character education that is mainly concerned with the moral theoretical preaching and the analyzing of the meanings of all types of specific characters, consciously or unconsciously ignoring the genuine and practical cultivation of the students' moral behaviours. But the truth is that "Neither does 'ought' imply 'can' nor it implies 'will'". Despite the fact that Confucius' perspective on the issues of character education is not entirely different from the perspective of either Aristotelians or

Kantians, it still has its own characteristics. On the whole, Confucianism ethics is practical, rather than dialectical or entirely theoretical. It has to be admitted that the intellectual knowledge can contribute a lot to the formation of the characters. But according to Confucianism ethics, there is a limit to the function of moral intellectual knowledge. What matters more is the moral will that ultimately leads to the consistent virtuous practice. From the perspective of Confucianism ethics, character is mainly defined as the consistent and persistent, willing activities of the soul in accordance with the fundamental virtues. With the solid and sound metaphysical and psychological basis, Confucianism ethics emphasizes the role of moral emotions and moral practice in the process of the formation of characters. No matter how much moral knowledge a person has mastered, eventually, it is the practical wisdom involving the conscious moral choices and, above all, the strong moral will that will fundamentally determine whether the moral agents will practice the virtuous life based on their sound characters. Just like Confucius said, "A youth, when at home, should be filial, and abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he should employ them in polite studies." [10] (p6) Essentially speaking, most of the important characters have to be consciously developed through practice. One of the most outstanding students of Confucius, Tsze-hsia, also said, "If a man withdraws his mind from the love of beauty, and applies it as sincerely to the love of the virtuous; if, in serving his parents, he can exert his utmost strength; if, in serving his prince, he can devote his life; if, in his intercourse with his friends, his words are sincere: Although men say that he has not learned. I will certainly say that he has." [10] (p6) As far as character education is concerned, learning through moral practice is a lot more important than learning from moral theory. The conscious moral will to practice the virtuous life can only be strengthened and enhanced by the conscious and consistent moral practice.

##### **4.2. The Essence of Practical Wisdom: From the Theoretical Horizon of Confucianism Ethics**

Both Aristotle and Confucius stress the significance of practical wisdom in the virtuous life. But there are some fundamental differences existing between them about what the essence of practical wisdom is. Strictly speaking, the practical wisdom is deeply rooted into the practical rationality, which is one of the most important characteristics of the Traditional Chinese culture. The absolutely pure rationality does not play a leading role in the moral life of Chinese people. The profound humanitarian emotions are the indispensable basis of the moral and virtuous life of the Chinese people. "Zai Wo asked about the three-year mourning period, saying, 'Even a full year is too long. If the gentleman gives up the practice of the rites for three years, the rites are sure to be in ruins; if he gives up the practice of music for three years, music is sure to collapse. A full year's mourning is quite enough. After all, in

the course of a year, the old grain having been used up, the new grain ripens, and fire is renewed by fresh drilling.' The master said, 'Would you, then, be able to enjoy eating your rice and wearing your finery?' 'Yes, I would.' 'If you are able to enjoy them, do so by all means. The gentleman in mourning finds no relish in good food, no pleasure in music, and no comforts in his own home. That is why he does not eat his rice wear his finery. Since it appears that you enjoy them, then do so by all means.' After Zai Wo had left, the master said, 'How unfeeling Yu is. A child ceases to be nursed by his parents only when he is three years old. Three years' mourning is observed throughout the empire. Was Yu not given three years' love by his parents?' " [10] (p 329-331) By properly combining the moral feelings and moral rationality, the character education appears to be natural and humanitarian, which can be more easily accepted and appreciated by the general public. Characters or the moral behaviors based on characters should originate from the natural and sincere feelings or the emotions of the moral agents, and they should not be imposed upon the moral agents by the circumstances or social regulations.

#### **4.3. Teaching Characters According to the Unique Conditions or Qualities of Each Student**

According to Confucius, "In instruction, there is no grading into categories." In other words, "In teaching, there should be no distinction of classes." [10] (p171) It means that Confucianism ethics places great emphasis on the importance of equality in the process of character education. There is a proper balance between elitism and egalitarianism when it comes to the Confucian theory of character education. Just like Confucius said, "From the man bringing his bundle of dried flesh for my teaching upwards, I have never refused instruction to any one." [10] (p63) In fact, the appreciation for the good side of human nature and the faithful confidence in the students' ability to truly live the virtuous life constitute the fundamental cornerstone of the traditional Chinese theories concerning character education. Confucius said, "Is virtue a thing remote? I wish to be virtuous, and lo! Virtue is at hand." [10] (p70) Based on the above-mentioned theoretical assumption, Confucius paid much attention to the importance of teaching each students according to their unique conditions and qualities. According to Confucius, "Of those who were with me in Chan and Tsai, there are none to be found to enter my door. Distinguished for their virtuous principles and practice, there were Yan Yuan, Min Tsze-chien, Zan Po-niu, and Chung-kung; for their ability in speech, Tsai Wo and Tsze-kung; for their administrative talents, Zan Yu and Chi Lu; for their literary acquirements, Tsze-yu and Tsze-hsia." [28] Even though all specific characters or virtues are important, they are not equally distributed among the students. With the different personalities and dispositions, we should teach the students according to their various conditions and qualities. Furthermore, the particular moral situations should also be

taken into account while carrying out character education. When Tsze-lu asked whether he should immediately carry into practice what he heard, Confucius said, "There are your father and elder brothers to be consulted; why should you act on that principal of immediately carrying into practice what you heard?" Zan Yu asked the same, whether he should immediately carry into practice what he heard, and Confucius answered differently, "Immediately carry into practice what you heard". [10] (p103-104) Another Student of Confucius asked why he two different answers to the same question, Confucius answered, "Chiu is retiring and slow; therefore, I urged him forward. Yu has more than his own share of energy; therefore, I kept him back." [10] (p110-111).

To improve the effectiveness of modern character education, undoubtedly, we need to take the students' different personalities into consideration while helping them develop the corresponding good characters.

## **Acknowledgement**

This study was supported by Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. (Grant No. 13XSK111).

## **References**

- [1] William Kilpatrick: Published by Simon&Schuster, 1992, Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong, p. 15.
- [2] The Construction of Children's Character, Edited by Alex Molnar, Published by the National Society For the Study of Education, 1997, p. 1.
- [3] Will Durant: The Story Of Philosophy, Published by Simon and Schuster, New York, 1949.
- [4] Bertrand Russell: A History of Western Philosophy, Published by Simon and Schuster, 1972, p. xv.
- [5] Great Traditions In Ethics, edited by Ethel M. Albert, Published by Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1984, p. 241.
- [6] Confucius: The Analects, Translated Into English by D. C. Lau, Published by Zhonghua Book Company, 2008.
- [7] Feng Youlan: A Short History of Chinese Philosophy, p. 333.
- [8] An Introduction to Confucianism, p. 32.
- [9] Xinzhong Yao: An Introduction to Confucianism, Published by Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 32.
- [10] The Chinese Classics, Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of The Mean, Translated into English by James Legge, Published by Shanghai Sanlian Book Group, 2014.
- [11] The Zhou Book of Change, Published by Shandong Friendship Press, 2000, p. 5.
- [12] The Construction of Children's Character, Edited by Alex Molnar, Published by the National Society For the Study of Education, 1997, p. 6.