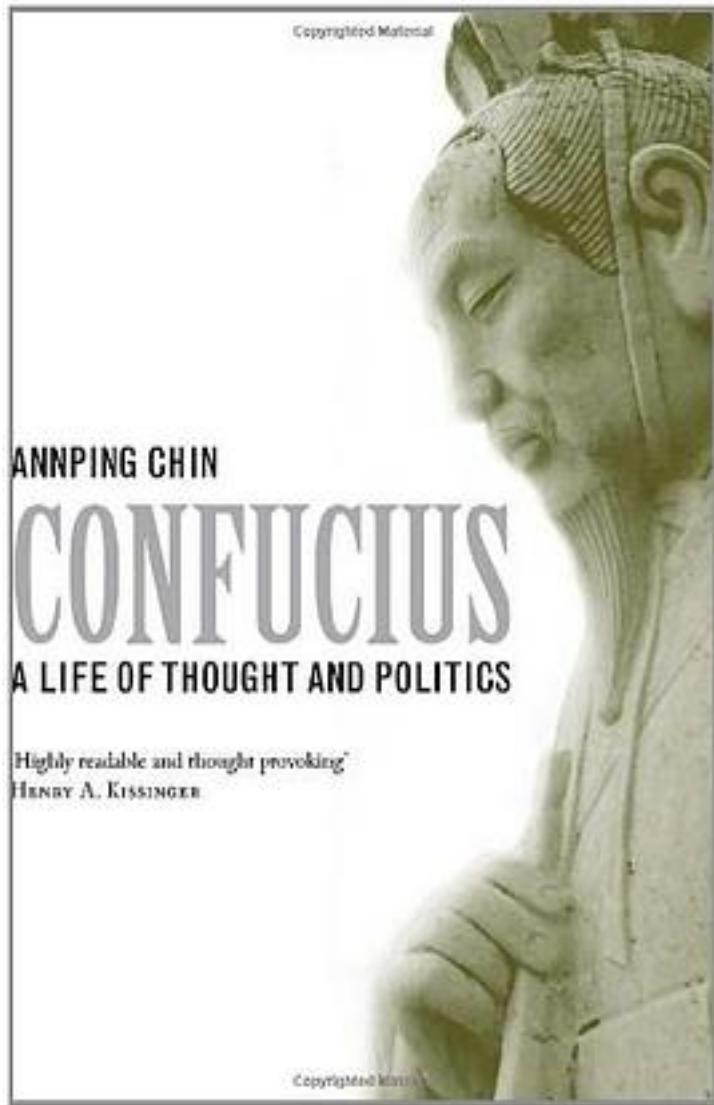


Confucius



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Heroes may be brave, but not all of those who act bravely are necessarily heroes. Confucius is one of the most important figures in Chinese history, the philosopher-founder of an intellectual, ethical tradition that has shaped a quarter of the world's population. Often overlooked outside his native country, Jonathan Clements reveals Confucius to be an outspoken and uncompromising man, and places him within the context of China of 2,500 years ago. Confucius, a contemporary of Buddha, was the illegitimate son of a retired soldier and a teenage concubine. He had a passionate belief in respect for others and it was this belief which underpinned his life and teachings. He advised the famous figures of his day, gaining their respect, and also the undying enmity of those whose paths he crossed. He was equally proud of both achievements, saying that if the evil people of the world liked him, he was doing something wrong. Confucius established many ideas that are taken for granted today. His theories became the foundation of one of the world's first civil services and established enduring social structures throughout Asia. In collating and refining the words of earlier, forgotten thinkers, he also preserved elements of China's prehistoric culture, and its ancient religion of ancestor-worship.

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