

## Medieval China

WORD OF THE DAY: DILEMMA: A situation where you have to make a difficult choice.

1. The Dilemma of Pang takes place in early Medieval China. This is approximately 400 AD. It is a story about piety—a great morality that the Chinese practiced (and still do in most parts) regarding service to others, particularly their parents.
4. The tradition of filial piety is just as important today as it was in the Middle Ages, although the Chinese government has attempted to install the state as the first priority in loyalties. But honoring elders and ancestors has prevailed. In fact, the principle became law in 2013. Today children who don't live with their aging parents have to visit them on regular bases and are required to purchase health insurance for them and teach them to use the Internet.
5. Ancestor worship in one form or another is widely practiced in Asia, Oceania, Africa, and among indigenous people of the Americas. It was also practiced in Europe in ancient and prehistoric times. As societies became stratified the ancestors (or sometimes single ancestor) of the most powerful became worshipped as gods. The notion of one god is a fairly late development.
6. The Dilemma of Pang strikes a dramatic contrast between the priorities of youth today in America, with their interest in recreation, technology, and personal goals over interests in their parents, and surely their ancestors. In fact, most children today do not even know who their ancestors were. America is one of the few countries that practices a one-way-down order of care—meaning parents are expected to care for children but not the reverse.
7. Latinos still practice a modest form of ancestor worship in Day of the Dead beliefs. They believe that at times the ancestors do step back in their lives as helpers, etc. They offer food and valuables on altars to their ancestors at various times of the year, especially on the Day of the Dead.

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