

6 端木赐 (小孔子三十一岁)

字子贡，春秋末年卫国人。出身寒微，聪明颖悟，能言善辩，善于货殖，且具有非凡的外交才能，多次在关键时刻奉孔子之命出使诸侯各国，均载誉而归。对孔子极为尊崇，晚年致力于孔子思想在各诸侯国的传播。有「亚圣之德」的美誉，被列为孔门四科十哲之一（言语科）。唐玄宗开元二十七年被追封「黎侯」，宋真宗大中祥符二年改封「黎阳公」，后又改封「黎公」。



6. DUANMU CI

(31 YEARS YOUNGER THAN CONFUCIUS)

Duanmu Ci, styled Zigong, was a native of the State of Wei in the late Spring and Autumn period. Born into a poor family, Duanmu Ci was intelligent, eloquent and quick-tongued in argument, and good at doing business. With extraordinary diplomatic abilities, he was sent to various states as an envoy by Confucius at critical moments, and distinguished himself and his master. He held Confucius in great esteem, and devoted himself to spreading Confucian thought in different states. He enjoyed a reputation of having the "virtue of the Second Sage", and ranked first of Confucius' ten chief disciples in the four classes (distinguished for able speech). In the 27th year of the Kaiyuan reign period of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty, he was given the title of Duke Li; in the second year of the Dazhong Xiangfu reign period of Emperor Zhenzong of the Song Dynasty, Lord Liyang; and later, Lord Li.