
History Of Confucianism And Its Comparative Analysis With Other Eastern Thoughts

The History

Confucianism is a philosophy that was developed by the social philosopher Master Kong (Confucius) in the year 551 - BC, whose teachings have deeply impacted East Asia. In fact, the fundamental principles of Confucianism began before the birth of the Zhou Dynasty. At that time, the idea of respect and the wellbeing was prevalent. These ideas united the people and helped prevent rebellion. Confucius believed that his philosophy was the way towards more civil society and a better world.

Master Kong never meant to start a new religion. His goal was to resurrect the religion of the Zhou dynasty, which people thought was an ancient system, that went bankrupt. Confucius believed that the foundation of the Zhou religion was in its rituals. His interpretation of these rituals was not as sacrifices asking for a blessing from the gods, he saw it more as ceremonies performed by humans and embodying the civilized and cultured patterns, that will further develop human behavior through generations of wisdom. These "rituals" were the basis of Chinese society, and that is why they were so important to Confucius.

When it came to the ethical vision Confucius ran against the grain of the logistic mind set of his day. Only under the Han emperor Wu did Confucianism become accepted. From that point on, the imperial state promoted Confucian values to maintain order within the law. In the late period of traditional China, emperors looked to establish village lectures on Confucian morals, to give awards to filial sons and wives. Imperial families sponsored the Confucian values of respect for parents, loyalty to the government, and keeping to one's place in society, for example, a farmer should remain farmer and practice the ethics of farming. This was the conservative side of Confucianism, and it was essential. It served to cushion the established institutions and long-standing social divisions.

Confucius's ideas were not widely accepted during his lifetime and he often regrets the fact that he remained unemployed by feudal lords (Ojedobe). Unlike Christianity and Buddhism, Confucius did not leave any writings to share his ideas, but instead, the text that disciples and students made are available and was broken up into four books. "The Book of Songs" combined ancient Chinese poetry with music and made it easy to memories and pass along. "The book of changes" was written to predict the future. "The book of documents" is a collection of rhetorical prose attributed to figures of ancient China and served as the foundation of Chinese political philosophy for over 2,000 years, and the "Book of Rites." The Book of rites is meant to restore the significance of traditional forms by looking at the simplicity of the past.

Confucius had come up with social rituals when he founded Confucianism, where specific ways of interacting with others. He explained that we all have a designated role in our relationships if we want them to be healthy and long-lasting. He also said that we need to be aware of what that role is, and how to live it out, so he came up with the five major relationships in one's life that are the most important. These relationships are so important, that if a person would commit a crime to a parent, the punishment would be extreme.

There have been tensions between the Confucian believers, and the non-follower all throughout Chinese history. However, the tensions between social and political realities and the high-minded moral ideals of the Confucians were an ongoing source of concern for the leaders of this tradition. The dangers of moral sterility and hypocrisy were always present. They served both as a conservative state orthodoxy and a stimulus for reform. Great Confucians, like religious leaders everywhere, sought periodically to revive and renew the moral, intellectual, and spiritual vigor of the tradition.

THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Confucianism, Taoism, and Hinduism are three totally different cultures, but share some of the same fundamental beliefs and practices with one another.

Taoism

Taoism is a Chinese philosophy that emerged from the LAO TZU in 500 BC, which helped the folk religion become the primary religion all throughout china, under the Tang Dynasty. Taoism is both a religion and a philosophy. It emphasizes on doing what is natural in accordance with the Tao, a cosmic force that connects all things to each other.

Hinduism

Hinduism or Sanatana Dharna is a religion that was created over four thousand years ago in India. It was a religion of the ancient people called the Aryans. The Arayans philosophy, customs, and religion are recorded in the sacred book of Vedas. These texts were handed down from teacher to student and have many rituals and rules as Taoism and Confucianism.

Respecting Elders

Taoist, Hindus, and Confucians value good acts, and are to be kind towards everyone, especially their elders. It's one of their most important rules in these cultures and its one example the connections between these three "religions."

Taoism - Tao Te Ching, Chapter 49 - "The sage releases their own stories, while accepting the stories of others. The sage is kind to the kind and kind to the unkind: for virtue is holding to kindness. Being as a child, within grace, when allowing us to perceive and embrace essence without judgment." (Source from Skylar R)

Confucianism - Analects 1.2 - Youzi said: "Those who are filial and brotherly (toward others) but also enjoy committing offenses against their superiors are few (indeed). Those who don't enjoy committing offenses against their superiors but (go about) creating disorder are non-existent. The junzi attends to the root. When the root is established, right action grows therefrom. Those who are filial and brotherly are getting at the root of humane behavior!"

Confucius used the word "Junzi" as one of the major belief or idea for Confucianism, and it has become one of the most important parts of the Confucianism Culture. Juzni is the idea of the 'perfect gentlemen', or "the perfect man" was what Confucius wanted all people to strive at. He once said that the "perfect man" was Confucius himself.

Hinduism - Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11.2 - There should be no errors in your duties to the gods and the Manes. Treat your mother as God. Treat your father as God. Treat your teacher as God. Treat your guest as God. Whatever deeds are faultless, those alone are to be performed and not others. Whatever good conduct is present in us, only those should be adopted by you and not others.

The value of good acts

The value of good actions is another major belief that Confucianism, Taoism, and Hinduism believe in. Hindus use a term known as KARMA. Basically, karma is where if you do something good for someone else, something good will happen to you in return. In Taoism and Confucianism, good acts are the foundation of the culture. It's what formed the other rules and values in these religions.

Conclusion

Confucianism is one of China's oldest religions in China, getting its fundamental assets from before the Zhou dynasty. Confucianism isn't really a religion at all, but a philosophy that was founded by Confucius in 551 BC. It is founded upon the values of respect, kindness, good acts, and becoming a better human. It has 4 books and is a very interesting way to look at and live life.

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