

Confucianism vs taoism politics philosophy essay



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Government has such an important impact on societal issues and duties. The United States was constructed from a written constitution thus the formation of our federal government establishment. I look at the constitution as our means for living in a well established society. Many individuals have different beliefs in how a society should be run. Take a look at the ancient Chinese philosophies of Confucianism and Taoism. Each has a different set of standards in their philosophy of life. It is difficult to understand the ethics and politics of Confucianism and Taoism without understanding its philosophy. What if the United States were to take on one of these philosophies? I believe Confucianism would be more widely accepted in our society. We are a nation based more on the concerns dealing with rule and work which is relevant for Confucianism's essence of a structured civilization.

The official doctrine in China by the second century B. C. E. was Confucianism. Confucius taught much about political inconstancy as he endured through the downfall of the Zhou dynasty. He had begun teaching at twenty-three years old and we get insightful information about some of his teachings through The Analects. Much of his writing is centered on issues the world with the focal points on family, politics, and modern humanity. Many ideals can be reach as being disciplined leading to virtuous accordance and communal efficiency.

" The Master said, ' He who learns but does not think, is lost.' He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger." (1595) The first sentence is the true core of knowledge. To fully understand what you have learned, it must be applied thus you are acquiring information. One who does not think may act on impulse. Thinking before you act can lead to gratifying decisions. In a

government you need a leader that can focus on a problem and figure out all possible choices that will be beneficial to the society. After the decision is made then it is necessary to take action. We need these ideals for the foundation of a good leader and the individuals as well. If someone just acts on impulse or does nothing, problems will arise either way. If you cannot be evaluating a certain thought, then nothing is gained in retrospect.

“ Our Master’s Way is simply this: Loyalty, consideration.” (1596) Confucius wanted to convey moral principles to establish a structured society. “ You yourself desire rank and standing; then help others to get rank and standing. You want to turn your own merits to account; then help others to turn theirs to account- in fact, the ability to take one’s own feelings as a guide- that is the sort of thing that lies in direction of Goodness.” (1596) A strong leader should be able to take care of his people. In return the people will abide by the rules which will result in a well developed society. “ Never do to others what you would not like them to do to you.” (1597) If we commence this morale rule than it would make sense for people to get along cohesively. No one is ever beneath you so selfishness should be nonexistent.

“ The Master said, A country of a thousand war-chariots cannot be administered unless the ruler attends strictly to business, punctually observes his promises, is economical in expenditure, shows affection towards his subjects in general.” (1600) “ The Master said, Govern the people by regulations, keep order among them by chastisements, and they will flee from you, and lose all self-respect. Govern them by mental force, keep order among them by ritual, and they will keep their self-respect and come to you of their own accord.” (1601) A set of laws are instituted and

should be followed, but the means of ethics would be followed if they saw their leader to be commendable. There would be an understanding for the governing embodiment concerning stability of virtue between individual and ruler. At the same time the ruler must be applying the example of good virtue. You will get the same respect back in return.

Laozi wrote a collection of poems entitled, Dao De Jing. The ideology of Laozi was polar opposite of what we saw from Confucius. Lao Tzu illustrates the meaning of life through Dao which literally means " the way". It is based on the individual to move connectively in the " eternal flow of life " that define the basis of Taoism. Taoism is believed that everything happens naturally in the world, thus human behavior is in correspondence of its' nature. The way to improve morality is doing nothing so that nothing is forced. Additionally it is about reaching beyond the sector of the traditional society. A true follower will not be attached to the power and politics of ordinary societal standards.

" Give up learning and put an end to your troubles." (1607) " Hence I know that value of nonaction. Teaching without words and work without doing Are understood by very few." (1609) " The farther you go, the less you know. Thus the sage knows without traveling; He sees without looking; He works without doing." (1610) Laozi says that inaction is the way to live in a state of natural harmonious bliss. The Dao states that no one should be conformed to society because we are just free spirits in the universe. We are not tied down to standard living and all expectations should be thrown away. You learn from your sense of self by the force of Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang is the approach of two of something forming to coherence. " It is more important To see the simplicity, To realize one's true nature, To cast off selfishness And

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temper desire.” (1607) Laozi wants society to give up materialistic possessions. We are endlessly learning and building upon expectations. The expectations are from our society which creates distress hiding from the greater good of humanity. The American Dream is the success of power and money which many of us chase after. Americans would never be able to give up material possessions. Going with the flow isn't always the best way to lead your life. At some point there will be important decisions that will alter your journey in life. Taoism wants you to sit back and relax, but inactivity can lead to destruction. It is hard to picture a leader in society to just go with the flow in directing his country. Productivity is vital to success. If a war breaks out we need to act quickly for the sake of protecting our people and our future endeavors. Americans are too selfish for Taoism because we have the conception of want embedded in our brain.

“ I think in the sense of traditional American values and being in line with the American Dream, Confucianism would be the more popular philosophy. It stresses themes of dedication to one's duty in life, dedication to one's family, social responsibility, and almost Christian-like themes of helping others and benevolence.” Many Americans can learn from the Confucianism philosophy. The ideas we are given from The Analects are structural enough for the foundation of political authority in establishing a society. On the contrary I do believe Taoism offers a counterbalance to the political ideals of Confucianism. Sometimes we get too involved with power which sometimes can lead to destruction when you are not looking out for the people. At the same time Confucianism has a means of higher authority through a set of moral principles. Furthermore our country needs a set of laws that everyone

is subject to. Without order chaos will break out with pure insanity. No society will ever be perfect, but we can always be willing to improve our standards of living a better life.