

# Example of the taoist philosophy essay

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



## **Philosophy: Taoism**

### Introduction

Taoism is a philosophy and a way of life that originated from Chinese with an accreditation to Lao Tzu who was born in 640 BCE. Tao can be categorized into three different interpretations. The first meaning is the way of the ultimate reality. Tao cannot be expressed and explained in a word. Whatever is spoken is not the real Tao but the true one transcends the reality of our daily lives; it was never created thus cannot be destroyed. Tao can be understood as the way of the universe, this suggests the omnipresent nature of Tao. It is existent in all places and in all things. It can be explained as the energy that flows and links the world uniting all that exists in the universe. A third explanation of Tao is the way of human life. The noble manner of one living in the universe is attributed to the presence of Tao. The energy that creates and exists in all living things emerges from both negative and positive forces. In Tao, we must balance our tendencies to match the real or true way of life.

The history of Taoism has been categorized into four convenient periods. The first period is the philosophical Taoism, the classical Taoism, Modern Taoism and contemporary Taoism. These are historical development levels of the religious tradition.

The earlier Taoist philosophy was mainly complemented by the natural observations. The philosophy is mainly concerned with the interdependence of all living and non living things existing in the universe. It mainly concentrated on the philosophy of comparison arguing that everything can

only be understood through mutual comparison. All things are deemed as interdependent through the various nature process observation which makes one be able to understand the life meaning and the place occupied on the earth thus a cornerstone of Taoist philosophy is attained.

The Taoist philosophy explains that all that happens in the natural environment is effortless which really does not mean lack of struggle but occurrence without premeditation. The Taoist philosophy is believed to be the belief in doing by not doing and lies solemnly in the Taoists; hearts.

## **The basic ideas and principles of Taoism**

Taoism has three main basic ideas such as oneness, non- striving and simplicity as these also act as the basic principles of such a religious tradition.

### **Oneness**

This is a principle closely associated with harmony and mutual balance and forms the center of Taoism. Tao is a unified and single principle of thought which tasks humanity with the recognition of the way of alignment. This however contains two opposing forces comprising of Yin and Yang which are thought to be feminine and masculine respectively thus a Taoists main agenda is seeking an existing balance in all life aspects.

### **The non-striving principle**

Taoism teaches on the idea of non-striving nature of individuals which receives a translation as wu wei and a common identification as ‘ action through inaction’ which receives a lot of criticism as imposing passivity. This principle is rather aimed at reducing the fights with the creation nature but

attuning an individual to Tao. This is closely connected to the idea of detachment and recognition of the nature cycles.

## **Simplicity**

Taoism is absolutely a nature based philosophical body thus embraces to a larger extent the values of simplicity. It emphasizes on the manifestations of the people, embracing the less fortunate and primitive, reducing selfishness and possessing limited desires. Complying with simplicity and the nature unity connects to all the values of Taoism. Taoism is thus attributed to minimalist approaches to the governing bodies and even other social institutions.

## **The reversal of values that Lao Tzu recommends**

The values that have been recommended by Lao Tzu have in varied circumstances been reversed. Gaining a philosophical rather than religious understanding, the values that have been recommended by Lao-tzu are getting disputed and reversed in certain instances. In philosophical Taoism, Chuang Tzu has been largely labeled as a liberal individual while Lao-tzu is a conservative person. The classical texts do not give clear and enough justifications for such positions. Laozi had also written earlier in a book proposing that minimizing the role of the government in cultural and economic activities would encourage economic growth. This is a position that has not benefited the liberals since it proves to be of impossibility to delimit the government and political bodies from the field of development.

## **The analysis of the role of reason**

Taoism plays a great role in the reasoning of the Taoists thus an essential part of the mind. Through the constant interaction with Taoism, one can establish the different perspectives of understanding Tao.

## **Keeping the one**

This stage has its own direction. Taoists consolidate their energy in order to make one whole or rather identify the one within oneself thus the elimination of imbalances individually and allowing interaction. This stage is consummated through meditation, custom action and other patterned behaviors which is pursued through martial arts. At the start of this process, one's mind is never fully in harmony with the body and the breathe. Such a state of disharmony existing between the mind, body and breathe disjoints Taoists from the 'one'. This imbalance is met by involving in a series of practical movements which enable them structure bodily motion and breathe. This however, requires Full Corporation and integration of the mind. This stage was described as having the individuals with the main goal of achieving absolute peace and purity of the mind, freedom from worries and elimination of selfish desires.

## **Chaos**

A well structured rhythm of practical state of chaos must be evident after the accomplishment of the first stage thus aiding a movement to the next stage. These preliminary stages are just a recipe to the integration. Moving into a state of chaos can be advanced through playing music. Within the desired chaos, Taoists achieve the freedom of interaction with totality of being. Unity

with Tao leads to absolute freedom of all and the participatory freedom in all movements of existence in permanent nature. In this second preliminary stage, Taoists cultivate the passive, feminine moon through the release of themselves to the order of chaos thus the existence in constant interactions.

## **The Return**

The reasoning of Taoists does not just end with the completion of the second preliminary stage but still moves to a third stage. This stage is significant in that Taoists no longer proceed with the external situations but rather become one with it. This case involves getting into parity with the situation as one generally becomes part of the experience. Such events reduce obscurity along the way as the dichotomy existing between Tao and the eventful experience is lost. The emphasis on Wu Wei

Wu wei is one of the most significant concepts in Taoism and has received a wider paradoxical understanding from various individuals. It is a cultivation of a state of being of effortless actions in the elemental compliance with the natural cycles of the world.

Wu Wei is derived from a traditional Chinese to mean lack of action or non-doing. It is explained in the classical text Tao Te Ching and believed that individual who are harmoniously in corporation with Taoism are naturally different from others. This has emphasis laid on the ability of making things happen without necessarily doing it or rather making an attempt of doing it. Wu Wei therefore in real sense serves as a governing effort. The practice of doing without action is a central assumption in the Chinese thoughts and has been gaining proper emphasis in Taoist schools. Action without action cannot be actually pursued but is observed in individual behaviors with conscious

control over individual lives.

Wu Wei is also commonly referenced as the action that does not involve struggle or the use of excessive force and effort. For example Wu means without and Wei refers to effort. This crop up the meaning of effortless action. The concept of effortless action is an integral part in the Taoist internal martial arts which indicates that wu Wei is in compliance with the main features and Taoism distinguishing tenets of naturalist. Application of effortless action in such cases therefore a requirement of taking a natural action.

In the original Taoist texts, Wu Wei is accorded a strong association with water and the productive nature. Owing not to the soft and weak nature of water, it still possesses the ability to erode solid stones and even displace mountains and hill. Water has no real will of shape though with an opposing characteristic. Water can therefore fit any type of container and assume the concrete container shape without absolute will thus the water cycle can potentially go anywhere with no limitations to minute holes. This is however the absolute nature of water.

Wu wei has been historically practiced within and outside the social and political structures. Laozi emphasizes on an enlightened leader who is able to rule in a convenient manner due to embodiment with wu Wei principles. The devaluation of conventional morality as deviation from the TaoTao has been viewed and presumed as good but not moral. The morality of the Tao has been conventionally changed. Tao is widespread, unknowable, and eternal. It is the mother of the universe, the container and sustainer in the sense of permeating everything. Tao is the way of heaven but considered

unconscious of all activities and has no purpose of seeking reward. The scriptures teach that it is possible to leave everything with Tao since it makes all possible through lack of activity and words.

Theists hold that Tao is at a greater and higher rank than God thus a common belief that God and his creations are forever separate. Christians therefore aspire to live together with God but doubt the unitary existence of God and creatures. God is therefore considered as less infinite.

### **The nature of the master**

The master's symbol gives a description of the Taoist master as it has been made by Lao Tzu himself. Lao-tzu the master of Taoism has no magical powers and features. The master is not a savior, not a healer, no conqueror of death and no son of god as can be compared to Jesus Christ who is the master of Christianity. The master does not have the mission to retract the world to its right path and so does not have the conviction of individuals to abide by his way in coercion.

### **The master of Taoism is shrinking and evanescent. They automatically find their places in the mastery position**

#### Conclusion

Taoism is an organized religious tradition that has been continuously transforming and emergent through China, Korea and Japan for a period lapsing to over two thousand years. Taoism has no single founder like Jesus for Christianity and Buddha for Buddhism and never holds on a single key message as the gospels or the four noble truths respectively. Apparently, Taoism has spread globally with over thirty one million followers; it has remained a prominent philosophy in Taiwan and has recently surged into the



west. It is seen as a more mystical religion owing to the fact that more individuals have opened wide their minds to exist peacefully with nature. In the sphere of governance, there are political theorists who have been influenced by Laozi to advocate for humility in administration and a restrained coercive approach to the statesmen for strategic ends.