

Aristotelian and confucian virtue ethics philosophies aristotle and confucius

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



Aristotelian and Confucian Virtue Ethics Philosophies Aristotle and Confucius were two Greek philosophers. They separately developed philosophies on virtue ethics, which many people think have parallels as much they are different. One of the similarities between the views of the two philosophers on virtue ethics is functional holism and perfectionism. The sense here is that people should strive to be the best thing that they can be; that people should strive to be holistic and on their best behavior at all times. Aristotle's *phron'sis* has parallels with Confucius' *yi*. This is where the two philosophers are in agreement on the idea that virtue is a type of knowledge, self-knowledge in this case, which results from self-examination. Once a person has the self-knowledge, they are able to have good life.

Another similarity stems from two views of the two philosophies that converge at a conclusion. Aristotle's relative means doesn't lead to any ethical subjectivism, just as Confucius maintains a normative and objective morality.

One notable difference between the two philosophies is that whereas Aristotle is of the opinion that a person could be a good citizen without necessarily having to be a good person, Confucius opines that a person can only be a good citizen, a law abiding one, when they are good people. He rejects Aristotle's disjunction. Confucius says that one begins by being a good individual, and then they can have a reflection of the personal virtues in their relationship with others, making them either a good or bad citizen. One would generally not buy bits of Aristotle's. For example, I would personally not agree with the idea that one can be a good citizen without first being a good person. In most cases, at least known to me, a bad person

can only extend the trait of being bad to how they relate with others.

Works Cited

Wenzel, Christian. Review of the ethics of Confucius and Aristotle: mirrors of virtue. *Philosophy of East and West* 60 (2): 303-306, 2010. Print.

Williams, Bernard. *Ethics and the limits of philosophy*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard university press. 2003. Print.

Yu, Jiyuan. *The structure of being in Aristotle's metaphysics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers. 2003. Print.