

Confucianism vs taoism



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Confucianism like Taoism are two of the most influential philosophies in Eastern culture.

They not only provide a way of thinking but a way of life. While they both give the impression that they have similar philosophies, they focus on the individual, and the way or the path that the individual takes. They appear to represent different methods of thinking about the world around us and to impose separate codes of behaviour. The main difference between the two philosophies lies in their focus. Confucianism focuses on the social, earthly orientation of everyday life and lays stress on ethics and ritual. Taoism places much more focus on nature, as well as the relationship and behaviour of the individual with himself, and achieving an inner harmony.

To simplify, while they both dwell on the improvement of the individual, Confucianism looks outward to accomplish this, while Taoism looks inward. Confucius believed that if a person behaved properly, then their family would follow suit, then their neighbourhood, their city, and in time the whole country. The basis for a good system of government was the ideal Confucius family. Analects (1: 2) “ Master Yu said, Those who in private life behave well toward their parents and older brothers, in public life seldom show a disposition to resist the authority of their superiors.

And as for such men starting a revolution, no instance of it has ever occurred. It is upon the trunk that a gentleman works. When that is firmly set up, the Way grows. And surely proper behaviour towards parents and elder brothers is the trunk of Goodness.” Not only does filial piety secure virtuous

conduct in the individual, it was also seen as vital in securing virtue in the nation as a whole.

Analects (XIV: 44) The Master said, So long as the ruler loves ritual, the people will be easy to handle." The Superior Man, according to Confucian beliefs, is not only virtuous because of his actions but because of his attitude as well. This is why the...