

On the Development and Integration of Buddhism and Confucianism

Guifeng Jia

School of Philosophy, Liaoning University, Shenyang, 110136, China

Keywords: Confucianists, buddhism, communication and development, mix together

Abstract: In ancient China, Confucianism was the mainstream of ideology and culture, which had a wide and profound influence on the development of Chinese culture. As a foreign thought, Buddhism culture, if the two thoughts are blended, then Confucianism and Buddhism gradually coexist harmoniously with the development of history. Buddhism, which was introduced into China from India during the Han Dynasty, absorbed China's traditional culture, Confucianism and Taoism in the long historical development and dissemination process, so that it was widely circulated in China. The integration and development of Buddhism and Confucianism has become a unique cultural phenomenon in the history of China. The most remarkable feature is that it teaches people how to combine the spirit of "entering the WTO" and "being born" in real life.

1. Introduction

During the long development of Chinese civilization, both Confucianism and Buddhism have exerted extensive and profound influence, and both have their own ideas and opinions. Indian Buddhism, as a foreign thought, began to spread from western countries to the Central Plains in the late Western Han Dynasty and early Eastern Han Dynasty. However, Confucianism, as the mainstream of China's traditional thought, is quite different from Buddhism which was first introduced into the Central Plains. This paper aims to analyze how Confucianism and Buddhism realize the transformation from heterogeneity to integration from the generation and background of the times.

2. Development Background of Confucianism and Buddhism

From the 6th century BC to the 5th century BC, Confucianism and Buddhism appeared almost at the same time, which was the essence of early oriental thought. Both of them gave birth to schools with worldwide influence. The core of Confucianism and Buddhism is people, each of them has made a comprehensive and systematic exposition of the meaning and value of life, both of them attach importance to the cultivation of virtue, and each of them has formed a set of philosophy of life. As we know, Confucianism has been playing an important role in the top ideology of feudal society in the ancient society of China for more than 2,000 years, which has a profound impact on the development of Chinese thought and culture. Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty "ousted a

hundred schools of thought and respected Confucianism alone", which made Confucianism brilliant for a while. Confucianism has the following characteristics: 1. Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, regards his words and deeds as the highest standard; 2. Take Poems, Books, Rites, Music, Book of Changes and Spring and Autumn Annals as scriptures; 3. Respect for "the way of benevolence and righteousness"; 4. Maintain moral norms such as "monarch and minister, father and son, husband and wife, brother".

Because of this, most dynasties in China insisted on running the country with Confucianism. Confucianism does not talk about ghosts and gods, but only about heaven, and the three cardinal guides and the five permanent members are unquestionable absolute authority. The greatest advantage of Confucian morality is that people's recognition of morality comes from the heart. In ancient times, limited productivity could not support a huge government, and in most cases, the people relied on their own families. The ancient family is equivalent to an autonomous society, with its own righteousness and fields; will pay for repairing bridges and roads and building communities; there are even their own law enforcement agencies-family law and family. In times of war, the family will also build fortresses, store food, train able-bodied men and protect the safety of its members, and the family members should also assume corresponding obligations. The family relies on the Three Cardinals and the Five Permanent Principles to maintain order, which is the most solid foundation of Confucian morality among the people.

As the founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha, whose family name is Gautama, was born in Kapilowei. Buddhists respectfully call him Sakyamuni, which means that Sakyamuni is a "saint" of the Sakyamuni people [1]. The abbreviation of "Buddha" is "Buddha", which means "enlightenment". And what is Buddhism? Buddhism is a religion, including its classics, rituals, systems, habits, religious organizations, etc., which is from a broad perspective; in a narrow sense, Buddhism is the enlightenment of Buddhism through words and deeds.

By the end of the Western Han Dynasty and the beginning of the Eastern Han Dynasty, Indian Buddhism began to spread from western countries to the Central Plains. At this time, Confucianism's understanding of Buddhism is still superficial. As early as hundreds of years ago, China had the distinction between Chinese and foreigners. There are a lot of contradictions between Buddhism and Confucianism. For example, Buddhism advocates becoming a monk (there are a large number of Buddhist scriptures, which are written by many people, and there are many contradictory statements, so only mainstream views can be introduced), while the Confucian ideal is to "cultivate Qi and make peace"[1]; Buddhism advocates the equality of all beings, even people and animals, which violates the three cardinal guides and the five permanent members. In this environment, the Buddhist scriptures circulating in China at that time had to delete the contents such as becoming a monk and equality of all beings, and some even deliberately added ideas such as loyalty, filial piety, benevolence and righteousness that conformed to the Confucian concept. However, even with such retreat, Buddhism can't get rid of the notoriety of "barbarians". Thus, under this background, a group of Buddhists living in China have been born to integrate the thoughts and ideas of Buddhism with those of the pre-Qin period. Among the pre-Qin philosophers, the thought of Laozi and Zhuangzi is the closest to Buddhism. In addition, in addition to Historical Records, there are indeed relevant records about Laozi's westward trip to Hanguguan, which leads to "Laozi's nonsense" [2].

Traditions such as ancestor worship and praying for blessings have existed in China since ancient times, which indirectly led to the adoption of the description mode of China's traditional mythology in the records of Buddhism, making people at that time understand "Buddha" as just another name for mythical figures. For example, there were references such as "Buddha, posthumous title". It is also known as the God of san huang and the Five Emperors. Due to the above misunderstandings, scholars in the Han Dynasty mistook Buddhism for one of the many folk

traditions.

Since then, Buddhism has merged with China's native ideas and cultures in the long historical process, gradually making Buddhism more and more China-like. The blending of Buddhism and metaphysics of Laozi and Zhuangzi also promoted the spread of Buddhism to a greater prosperity in the Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties. Under the influence of Confucianism and metaphysics, great changes have taken place in the original Buddhist thought: for example, the "five permanents" advocated by Confucianism and "benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and faith"; The "five precepts" advocated by Buddhism are "no killing, no stealing, no lewdness, no lying, no drinking"; Taoism advocates "five elements" and "gold, wood, water, fire and earth", which are compared one by one. After the Tang and Song Dynasties, a large number of Buddhist monks believed that Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were actually one family [1]. In the eyes of other religions in the world, "heresy" is an extremely sensitive thing. However, it is difficult for traditional China people to distinguish Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism clearly, especially after the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Confucius, as the founder of Confucianism, put forward the idea of "benevolence". Although he expressed his idea of governing the country, his original intention was to maintain the rites of Zhou Dynasty [1]. From the Spring and Autumn Period to the Warring States Period, with the change of superstructure caused by the continuous development of productive forces, the connotation of Confucianism also changed, and the ideological concept of coping with social changes was established.

In the traditional culture of China, both Confucius' thought of "benevolence" and Mencius' theory of "goodness of human nature" are related to the issue of human nature. In view of this, Mencius believed that "everyone has compassion." [1] Zhu Xi believes that "there is nothing wrong with the nature of destiny" [1], and in Buddhism "all beings can become Buddhas" is very similar to the "benevolence" advocated by Confucianism. After the Tang Dynasty, the academic circles in China gradually tended to integrate the three religions, and every intellectual was familiar with Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Buddhism thinks that the essence of things is "emptiness", Taoism thinks that the essence of things is "Tao", while Neo-Confucianism thinks that the essence of things is "reason".

Regarding "Li", Zhu Xi believes that there are two things in the essence of everything. The ultimate law of things is "reason", and "reason" produces "Qi" [1]. "Qi" is a kind of movement. Through the movement of "Qi", various things and phenomena in the world are produced. [3] How does "Qi" produce matter? The representative of "Qi" is Yin and Yang, which are two properties of matter. The movement of Yin and Yang produces the five elements, so various substances with the five elements properties are produced, and these substances produce everything in the world [3]. The whole universe has a "reason" [3], and everything has its own "reason" [3]. Zhu Xi believes that "reason" exists in all phenomena in the world. We can understand "reason" by observing all phenomena in the world and thinking. This "principle" is very similar to natural science such as physics, because natural science is to discover the laws by studying all the phenomena around it. The difference is that natural science only tells us what the world looks like, but not what the world should look like. Natural science only makes factual judgments, not value judgments. But Neo-Confucianism is different. Zhu Xi believes that this "reason" not only contains the objective law of "what the world is originally", but also contains the moral law of "what the world should be".

So how can we find "reason"? People also belong to all things, and everyone has "reason" in his heart [3]. However, since everyone has the same "reason" in their hearts, why do people have different external manifestations? This is because, although the "principle" in everyone's mind is the same, the "Qi" is different. "Qi" is clear and turbid. The clear is a saint, and the turbid is a mediocrity. The purpose of practice is to change the Qi from turbid to clear. The so-called "turbid"

Qi is mainly people's immoral desires, which cover up "reason". Therefore, Cheng Zhu's Neo-Confucianism said, "Preserve justice and destroy human desires". Later generations often criticize Cheng Zhu's Neo-Confucianism for imprisoning human nature with the phrase "preserving the natural principles and destroying human desires", which is inaccurate. The so-called "human desire" is not all human desires, but those that violate the Confucian system. However, it is not enough to get rid of polluted air. Because abstinence is a negative behavior and can't guide people to take the initiative to do something. Zhu Xi believes that Confucius is great because he understands "reason", so the Analects of Confucius will become a classic handed down from generation to generation. Zhu Xi believes that "reason" exists in everything, so we can find it by studying the little things around us. Zhu Xi called the process of people observing and thinking about individual things to discover the ultimate truth contained in them "Gewu" [3], but Gewu doesn't have to exclude everything. Since everything contains the ultimate truth, in theory, as long as the reason of one thing is exhausted, the ultimate truth can be obtained [3]. One day, I suddenly found myself understanding everything in the world, and I finished my goal. As a result, after the long-term integration of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, Neo-Confucianism in Song and Ming Dynasties was finally formed, which spanned the birth and entry into WTO.

There are a lot of similarities between Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism. The example of Zhu Xi's "Moon Reflects Wan Chuan" is very similar to the metaphor of Hua Yanzong's "Indra Net" where the orbs correspond to each other. Zhu Xi believes that in theory, the truth of all things can be discovered by only one thing, which is also very similar to Hua Yanzong's "One is everything". This is also very similar to Neo-Confucianism. As a scholar dedicated to revitalizing Confucianism, Zhu Xi rejected Buddhism very much. However, from his Neo-Confucianism, it is not difficult to see that he was influenced by Zen, which is equivalent to an incomplete version of Zen.

3. "Benevolence" and "Kindness" — Confucian "Benevolence" and Buddhist "Compassion"

Confucius first put forward the concept of "benevolence", "Fan Chi asks for benevolence, Confucius says: love." [4] From the perspective of "love", this is the basic meaning of Confucius' "benevolence". Benevolence in a broad sense, such as, "Confucius said: today's filial piety is said to be able to support." As for dogs and horses, they can all be raised. Disrespect, why not? "[4] This is the emotional nature of "benevolence"; "Confucius said: Disciples are filial when they enter, and they are filial when they leave. They are sincere and believe, and they love all the people and are kind." [4] This is the universality of "benevolence". In a broad sense, "benevolence" contains a wide range and is the comprehensive unity of all kinds of "benevolence" trips. Benevolence in a narrow sense includes the principles of daily use, such as "Confucius said: benevolent people are benevolent, and those who know are benevolent." [4]; Confucius said, "A loyal person wants to be a man, and he wants to be a man." "Forgive him, and don't do to others what he doesn't want." [4] This is to emphasize the moral sense of responsibility. Another example is, "Yan Yuan asked benevolence, Confucius said: self-denial"; "see no evil, don't listen to evil, don't say evil, don't move." [4] This is an emphasis on moral self-discipline. Mencius' benevolence is also divided into broad sense and narrow sense, such as "compassion and benevolence", which is from the perspective of chivalry. Another example is, "Mencius said: everyone can't bear it, and it's benevolent to be patient." This is in a broad sense. "Benevolence" requires people to be "old and old, young and young, and young and young." Ask people to "kiss and respect each other." Benevolence is the inner essence, and loving others is the external expression of this essence. Therefore, Confucius actively advocated the practice of "benevolence" and emphasized that "benevolence depends on oneself".

From the perspective of historical development, the integration of China's localized Buddhism and traditional Confucianism is the result of seeking common ground while reserving differences. In the process of historical development, they played their respective roles in maintaining the stability of feudal social order under the rule of imperial power.

Kindness refers to giving people happiness, and sorrow refers to relieving people's suffering, so the two are collectively called compassion. "Compassion is the core of Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism advocates purdue sentient beings and helps others practice. According to the theory of samsara, everyone today has gone through countless samsaras, and every life in the world has been our parents or children in previous lives. Therefore, the Brahma Sutra says, "All men are my father and all women are my mother." "Six sentient beings are all my parents. Those who kill and eat will kill my parents and kill me. "Based on this theory, Mahayana Buddhists have developed compassion to help others jump out of reincarnation. For those who have reached a very high level of practice and are determined to achieve enlightenment for all beings, Mahayana Buddhism has added a "Bodhisattva" above Arhat and below Buddha. The characteristics of "Bodhisattvas" are that they all have great compassion and compassion, and they take the universal life as their own responsibility. "Bodhisattva" made a wish, called "original wish", and could not become a Buddha until his "original wish" was realized, for example, "Hell is not empty, and I will never become a Buddha." Another example is, "I should be a bridge for ten people, so that they can learn from me."

In the Buddhist scriptures, the idea of "no mercy, no compassion" and the idea of treating people with kindness are the same as the Confucian idea of "kissing, caring for the people and loving things", all of which advocate treating everyone with love and compassion. Therefore, "benevolence" and "kindness" have always played a positive role and exerted a wide influence in the long history of Chinese civilization.

4. Similarities between Confucian "Rites" and Buddhist "Commandments"

Yongzheng emperor's Imperial edict said: "The five precepts and ten good deeds of Fu Fo's lead people to be good. My Confucianism has a hundred lines, and it is tempting to reward and persuade. Is there one who does not attract people to be good? "The meaning of this sentence is obvious. Although there are various differences in form between the precepts advocated by Buddhism and the rites advocated by Confucianism, all roads lead to the same goal, and they all advise people to treat others with kindness. For example, the precepts of Buddhism are to practice benevolence; The other commandment is to do good if you keep it. These two commandments can be summed up in one point, that is, teaching people to be tolerant of others. The "five permanents" advocated by Confucianism are also five norms for social harmony and stability from a positive perspective.

The "five precepts" advocated by Buddhism also have many similarities with the "five permanents" advocated by Confucianism. The main point of the Five Commandments is to stop evil, while the main point of the Five Commandments is to promote good. For example, in China folk culture, there are several famous monks who don't obey the precepts: Ji Gong, drinking and eating meat; The Monkey King, killing robbers; Lu Zhishen drinks, eats meat and kills countless people. According to Buddhist standards, the above-mentioned monks, far from being eminent monks, will probably be punished. However, these monks are very popular positive figures in China, because their actions do not actually violate Confucian moral standards. Another interesting evidence is that although the above-mentioned people drink and eat meat, kill and set fire, none of them commit lewdness. Because "lewdness" refers not to ordinary sexual behavior, but to the violation of Confucian ethics, nothing is more important to Confucianism than the Three Cardinal Principles and the Five Permanent Principles. "Prostitution" is a direct destruction of ethics, and murder does not violate ethics as long as it kills bad people.

That is to say, when the ancient people in China accepted the basic ideas of Buddhism, they took the moral ideas of Confucianism as the basic starting point. Another moral bottom line of Confucianism is to respect teachers, such as Jigong, the Monkey King and Lu Zhishen. Although they have committed various commandments, they all maintain respect for the Buddha and their elders. Although they are characters in the novel.

5. Conclusion

Chinese culture changes with the development of the times, but both Confucianism and Buddhism highly admire the thoughts of benevolence, kindness, loyalty and filial piety. In the historical process of Chinese civilization, loyalty, filial piety, benevolence and righteousness are eternal spirits. Confucianism and Buddhism are two important components of Chinese culture. Today, it still profoundly affects modern people's attitude towards life, values and behavior. Only by adhering to and carrying forward China's excellent traditional culture can we promote social development and the progress of civilization.

References

- [1] Feng Dawen, Guo Qiyong, *A New History of China Philosophy Up*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2004.
- [2] Tang Yongtong's. *Tang Yongtong Academic Essays*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2016 1st Edition: 75.
- [3] Feng Dawen, Guo Qiyong, *A New History of China Philosophy Down*. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2004.
- [4] Chen Xiaofen. *Translated The Analects of Confucius*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2016.