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# Transcendence and Nature in Chinese Philosophy: Man, Through the Eyes of Confucius, Laozi And Buddha

**Berdiyev Umid Shoymurotovich**

Tdshu Phase 3 Foundation doctoral student, Uzbekistan

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## ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the concepts of transcendence and nature in Chinese philosophy based on the teachings of Confucius, Laozi, and Buddha. While Confucius sees man as a social being adapted to moral standards in society, Laozi considers him to be a natural being who must live in harmony with nature. In Buddhism, however, the central place is occupied by the attainment of spiritual maturation, deliverance from illusion, and reaching a transcendental state. This article provides a comparative analysis of the approaches of these three philosophical currents to human nature, its perception of the self and its spiritual and spiritual elevation. Through philosophical ideas, the relationship between man and nature is revealed, as well as the content of transcendence.

**Keywords:** Chinese philosophy, transcendence, nature, man, Confucius, Laozi, Buddha, philosophical doctrine, spiritual maturation, harmony.

## INTRODUCTION

The Revenge of nature on people indicates that the conquest and control of nature cannot bring universal prosperity to people, and people need to change their ways. Today, the natural and environmental problems caused by the rapid development of human civilization are becoming more and more acute, forcing humanity to reflect seriously. An important topic for reflection is the mobilization of all cultural resources and access to dialogue to master the ideological feed that can be used for information and determine the right direction for future development. Therefore, building a relationship between man and nature based on theoretical research and research of man and nature is very necessary and of practical importance.

Thoughts of Chinese Traditional Culture on the relationship between man and nature

Chinese traditional culture is the sum of the spiritual worldview, psychological state, way of thinking, direction of value, etc. of the entire society, which is collected, brought up and formed in the socio-historical development

of China. A distinctive feature of traditional Chinese culture, based on a long-term agricultural civilization, is that it never speaks of culture in isolation from nature, nor does it form a humanistic tradition in the confrontation between man and nature. On the contrary, traditional Chinese culture develops a humanistic spirit in a harmonious unity of Man and nature, that is, in traditional Chinese culture, the idea of harmony between man and nature is not an independent cosmic philosophy, but a philosophy of life. Therefore, with the help of this feature of Chinese traditional culture, the value and understanding of respect for nature can be integrated into the daily survival and life consciousness of people.

### a. Confucianism's "unity of nature and man"

Western philosophical thought and the fundamental issues of being, in comparison with the fundamental issues of the relationship between material and spirituality, the relationship between heaven and man is a fundamental issue in Chinese philosophy, and the "unity of Man and nature" is the "fundamental spirit and exalted sphere" of

Chinese philosophy [1, 7]. It is based on the experience of the direct living of ancestors in the conditions of a long-term agricultural civilization, it understands the inextricable connection between human survival and nature by understanding the natural rhythm of changes and the organic order of life. Confucianism had great results in this opinion.

First of all, the "Analects of Confucius" says: "What does the Sky say? How do the Four Seasons move and everything appears? What does heaven say?" [2] according to Confucianism, heaven is not a supernatural God, but a true nature. The action of the four seasons and the growth of everything is the "birth" of paradise; of course, a person is also part of everything. Consequently, the origin and root of Man and everything is one in nature, deeply rooted in nature, not the owner of nature, but a flower that opens up in nature [3, 17]. Secondly, the idea of "harmony between man and nature" is based on a deep foundation of morality and morality. The central value of Confucian moral thought is Confucian "mehr - rén", a concentrated expression of the humanistic spirit, and "compassion", a high virtue of the subject. But "humanism" "has nothing to do with Paradise; but rather" humanism "is given by talent, and its main source is the" quality of life "or" principle of life" of heaven and Earth. The quality or principle of life is the same for everyone and everything, and there is no difference between the inner and the outer, between things and myself. That is, "the benevolence of Heaven, Earth and everything "means that" Ré-rén " humanity means loving not only people, but everything. Confucianism cares for life unconditionally and is filled with love for everything in nature, so Confucianism takes an example from heaven and earth through the logic of the connection between the Milky Way and the human way. Confucianism, full of love for everything in nature, follows the logic of the connection between heaven and humanity, takes an example from heaven and earth, and extends "humanity" to nature, thereby expanding interpersonal morality to natural morality. Such an expansion is a "differential" relationship, consisting of intimacy and distance between a moral subject and a moral object, that is, "being close to relatives is benevolence to the people, and benevolence to the people is love for things. "The objects of moral care are constantly expanding from people to inhuman animals, plants and inanimate objects.

Confucianism believes that whatever mental state the moral subject has, it treats all things in nature in a certain way." If you can fulfill the nature of people, you can fulfill

the nature of things; if you can show the nature of things, you can confirm the change and upbringing of heaven and earth; if you confirm the change and development of heaven and earth, you can join with Heaven and earth" [4, 22]. Consequently, a person with a "human "nature and a" humanistic " state is able to consciously protect all things in nature and never destroy them at his own discretion; the place of people in the universe as the soul of everything, that is, the moral subject, is to take care of everything in heaven and earth and help everything develop smoothly. Here we can see an important feature of Confucian humanist values: Confucianism emphasizes humanism without breaking the relationship between man and nature; he glorifies the dignity of man, but does not deny the existence of natural objects.

As a philosophy of life, "the wise enjoy water, the benevolent enjoy mountains" is a spiritual world promoted by Confucianism [5]. Loving and wise people's love for mountains and rivers fully reflects the feelings of loving people and is also the backbone of the life of benevolent people. Here " happiness 乐-lè "is the experience of Confucius 'world of" harmony between man and nature". It is difficult for a person deprived of care for nature to have such experience and such "happiness". The joy of mountains and rivers is undoubtedly the beauty of nature, but happiness can be felt only when human vital feelings are absorbed into the mountains and rivers of nature, that is, when Man and nature enter a state of harmony. Confucianism responds in its own way to the question of the "good final nature" of life, that "harmony with Heaven and Earth" - a person returns to earth and Heaven through an "aesthetic process" - purifies his life, soul, and achieves Infinity.

Although limited by time and empirical thought, Confucius's theoretical thought is still limited to simple theoretical categories, but the idea of "the unity of nature and man" considers the relationship between man and nature from a fundamental point of view. It promotes the human nature of "love, humanity, compassion, generosity (仁爱)" to all things in the universe, and promotes the aesthetic field of harmonizing man with natural landscapes, providing much inspiration for future generations on how to look at the relationship between man and nature. The German sinologist Bu Sonshan [6] argued that at one time, "the unity of nature and man" was a thought of Man and nature with the characteristics of traditional Chinese culture and that it was also a worldwide thought. "In a context where the ecological crisis and

ecological balance are severely disrupted, emphasizing the Confucian unity of nature and man can prevent humanity from following a dangerous path. Traditional Chinese Confucianism emphasizes the unity of nature and man, with valuable and practical significance that transcends national boundaries" [7, 396].

"The path of heaven and nature" in my Taoism Suppose Confucianism uses the path of humanity to form the path of paradise with a positive attitude towards the world. In that case, Taoism uses the path of Heaven, which is free and unnatural, to explain the path of humanity. The main category of Daoist theory is "道-dào"-path, highest tamol, perfection [8, 1]. As the essence of everything, "道" is impartial and selfless, giving its essence to everything in the world. The "道道" of everything has a basis for existence, so "道道" is the universal source of the final value for Ontology and everything in the universe. Humanity must observe everything from the height of the "Dao" and respect the nature of Heaven, Earth, and all life. That is, "from a Daoist point of view, things are neither noble nor inferior and 'things and I are the same' [9]. In what sense does 'Dao' exist? 'Taoism and nature' is the answer to this question. 'Dao' exists in a 'natural' way. Instead, 'nature' is the existence or state of 'Dao'. The harmonious and perfect order of all things in the world and universe is the natural descendant of the 'Dao', which move and change according to the natural order.

In this eternal transformation, things cannot be separated from each other, and their transformation eventually leads to a harmonious unity. Likewise, man exists in nature, and, among all things in nature, man must follow the path of paradise and follow nature, be in harmony with everything according to the laws of nature, respect everything, allow himself to find his place and live in his own way. Similarly, the interpersonal order is within the natural order of heaven and earth, and the order of human society must also mimic the natural functioning of heaven and Earth. Therefore, the sage manages to do nothing, "to support the nature of everything and not dare to do anything." If something does not follow the laws of nature and develops excessively, it will become its opposite. That is, the law that follows the action of everything "must change the extreme state of things" and the so-called "reverse dao Action" [9, 40], so that human activity cannot disturb nature and act arbitrarily. Needham once had a deep conclusion about this natural attitude of Taoism. He noted, "there are two famous maxims of Taoism: 'nature' and 'inaction' (自然..)".

Nature means the natural development of things according to their nature; "inaction" means not coercion, but allowing things to develop according to their nature according to their laws, and not breaking the will of nature at all. It is even believed that everything will be harmonious if people follow the order of their nature, putting their way into nature.

Forcing people to do things they don't want runs the risk of harming and putting them under pressure. When everyone acts at their discretion, some kind of natural cooperation and natural happiness arises, so that the world becomes a paradise of real life [10, 17]. Like Confucian philosophy, Taoism speaks of "nature" and "the study of the relationship between heaven and man", in fact, it is not "learning", but the study of the method of "going the real way (为道)" in life. According to the Daoist point of view, the vital activity of a person is part of the natural order. "Nature" is both a source and a goal for a person. It is the original and true state of human existence and the final destination of life activity, which is called "return to its roots and return to life" [9, 16]. Laozi promotes a "return to nature" and the acceptance of nature as his home, a purposeful aspiration, that is, the realization of personal virtue and the achievement of a "natural" state.

Regarding how this state can be achieved, Laozi has the "three treasures" (三 - sānbǎo): "the first is compassion, the second is thrift, the third is not daring to be the first in the World" [9, 16]. A righteous person can treat everything with compassion, "saving things" instead of "leaving things", he has no bad intentions towards all creatures, does not harm animals for his lust. Each of the humans and animals can find their place, live in their own home and live harmoniously in nature. A good person can lead a frugal life. Daoists believe that excessive desires are contrary to nature and harm the natural nature of people. "Five colors make a person blind, five tones deaf, five tastes delight a person's mouth (feel good and lose it - the author's note), speed drives the heart crazy, and rare moles make travel difficult" [9, 67]. If you constantly strive for external things, you lose your human nature, disturb your mind, behave disobediently and even "drive crazy" [9, 12]. Consequently, Laozi opposes lavish pleasures in favor of "contentment with low desires", "silence without desires" [9, 37] when it comes to material things; but spiritually, Laozi is a very high aspiration, that is, the cultivation of goodness and the realization of the high state of "dao", which also means a harmonious union of Man and nature. When everything in the world follows the concept of

harmony and finds its coordinates in a rich and colorful nature, they can flourish. How do you look at these Daoist "inaction" ideas that do not correspond to the progress we are promoting today? I believe that the value of culture should not be measured only in terms of pragmatism or utilitarianism. For us today, Laozi's attitude to material and spiritual things provides information about how modern people react to nature and how modern people look at their aspirations for a luxurious life.

There is no doubt that the material aspiration to meet the needs of survival, spiritual search, that is, the thinking of people about the meaning of life, is to some extent lagging. However, when people are not at all worried about food and clothing, the question of the meaning of life becomes important. The great achievement of modern civilization is the release of unprecedented productivity and the creation of the brilliance of material civilization; that is, it is believed that people can strive for the meaning of life in the form of material benefits and strive for a self-sufficient state of life. In fact, when people seek the meaning of life only with material benefits, they are far from the framework of self-sufficient life. This can even lead to the fact that people cannot get rid of the trap of material desires, which leads to personality disorders and alienation of human nature. Based on the current state of the dualistic separation between material civilization and spiritual civilization in modern society, humanity seems to have already forgotten the meaning of life and the need to strive for extraterrestrial (transcendence) through spiritual search.

Laozi believes that the meaning and dignity of life comes from nature, and according to the laws of nature, it is transcendence in life. Man is part of nature, nature is infinite, but people are limited. Only by being one by the way of nature can we realize the ultimate meaning of life and achieve an infinite sphere. a. Buddhism "all living things are equal" The universal transformation of " Dao "produces everything and everything survives by obtaining" Dao". Therefore, Taoism says: " If you look at it from the point of view of something that is the same, everything will be the same." Buddhism begins with the inner nature of Buddha Nature, in terms of the fact that everything can become Buddha, "all living things are equal." In general, all Buddhism recognizes that all living things have Buddha nature and are equal in nature to Buddha and all living things. In addition, Zen-Buddhism not only confirms that living beings have a Buddha-nature, but also recognizes that insensitive plants and trees have a Buddha-nature. "Green and green bamboo are full of

Dharma bodies; gloomy yellow flowers are nothing more than Prajna, "says that every plant and tree in nature is full of life, and Zen all has its own value of Buddha nature. and deserves the attention of the people. From a philosophical point of view, Zen takes care of flowers, plants and trees based on the universal existence of Buddha nature, a combination of subjective moods and objective objects. Zen Buddhism requires respect for the dignity of life to evoke the caring attitude of people towards life. Ralston, an American environmental ethicist, noted, "Zen knows how to coordinate everything broadly, without losing its inherent meaning to everything in the universe. Zen knows how to reconcile the science of life with the holiness of life ". This Buddhist thought reveals its unique life values, survival and lifestyle.

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