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Confucianism and Taoism

**Q1. Confucianism and Hindu Caste System**

Confucianism was developed by Confucius who emerged as retransmitter and recodifier of the values and theologies inherited from the Zhou Dynasty and the Han Dynasty. Confucianism can be regarded as a religion, a way of life, a system of society, a philosophy, a tradition, a humanistic approach or merely a method to lead the life in a more rational way.

Confucius focused on many aspects of daily life and the various areas of society. He presented an elaborated way of life and how to live and behave in society. One of the significant contributions that he made was in the area of relationships. He laid great emphasis on the importance of relationships and how to build healthy and successful bondings.

Confucius was of the view that social harmony is a result of balanced relationships and with each person knowing his or her place in society. He stressed that every individual in the community should be aware of his or her roles in society and should perform them, responsibly. He introduced the five major types of relationships that exist in the society, i.e., father to son, ruler to ruled, husband to wife, friend to friend and elder brother to younger brother.

On the other hand, there exists another approach to life and society known as the Hindu caste system. Hindu caste system, as compared to the Confucian system of relationships, is a rigid and non-flexible approach. It consists of defining the relationships of the people and the social role of the individuals as they are born and they stick to it throughout their life. The Hindu caste system is similar to the Confucian relationship system in a way that both teach respect and humanity as the core values for the sustainability of the relationships.

Both the systems, Confucian system, and Hindu Caste system have a profound effect over the societies of China and India respectively. They deeply affect the way people behave in relationships and in society.

**Q 2. Tao Te Ching’s Criticism over Confucian’s Values**

Tao te Ching is a classical text written in the 6th century BC and is attributed to the famous ancient philosopher Laozi. Tao Te Ching provides n elaborated code of life that guides the human race to lead their lives in a proper way. Tao Te Ching is also followed as a religious script in China, and many people take it as a guiding light for the solutions of their daily life problems.

Tao te Ching’s teachings are in contrast to the guiding principles of Confucianism. Confucianism focuses greatly on being very kind and humble towards the society and not to look down upon anyone. On the other hand, Taoism encourages to keep the intelligent and cunning side of the reality in consideration as well and not to forget about the negative aspects of society. At one side, where Taoism is a way to led life or a complete code of life, Confucianism, at the other side, focuses only on the societal and relationship aspect of human life.

In the given excerpt, Tao Te Ching gives the same argument that not to run blindly into the matters and guides an individual to keep their eyes open. Although Tao Te Ching also puts great emphasis on human values and kindness, it also encourages a person to think more rationally and also keep in mind the other side of the world.

In my opinion, the teachings of Tao Te Ching provide a great oath to lead the life by and can be used as a guiding light to form opinions and ideas regarding various aspects of life.