The Comparison of Educational Thoughts Between Confucius and Jesus

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Abstract. Faced with the problems of modern education, scholars need to learn from the wisdom of ancient educational resources, to discover the educational principles and laws behind the positive impact of traditional education and to rethink the meaning of education based on social reality and with a philosophical dialectic attitude. This article compares the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus based on the context of their times, and restores the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus through the lens of comparative pedagogy. The educational thought of Confucius and Jesus is analysed from three aspects: the essence of education, the goals of education and the practice of education. Confucius' and Jesus' interpretations of their respective original ideas of "heaven" and "God" gave rise to the specific ideas of "benevolence" and "divine love". The educational ideas of Confucius and Jesus have been tested and developed in concrete educational practice. Through a comparison of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus, the historical role of their educational thought is analysed in a critical manner, revealing the conflict and convergence between the two. It also provides a rational application of the principles shared by Confucius and Jesus in the comparison of their educational philosophies to the needs of contemporary education, and provides theoretical resources to address the contemporary educational crisis in China.

Keywords: Confucius; Jesus; Educational thoughts; Comparative study.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of China's economy, cultural confidence has become an important issue for every Chinese. Chinese scholars need to learn from the essence of traditional culture, to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese traditional culture, and need to find solutions to modern educational problems in the contrast between Chinese and other foreign cultures. Confucius is the originator of the Chinese school of Confucianism and a symbol of traditional Chinese culture; Jesus is the Mogi of Western Christianity and a representative of Western cultural traditions. Cultural revival requires educational practices, and the educational ideas of Confucius and Jesus have had a profound impact on both Eastern and Western civilisations. The main purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative study of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus from the perspective of educational philosophy in the context of a pluralistic civilisation, and to discover the principles and laws inherent in educational thought, reveal the factors overlooked in modern educational thought, and realise the purpose of comparative literature.

From the perspective of traditional educational thought, the ideas of Confucius and Jesus are rich in educational resources and have had a profound impact on the world's civilisation. It is relevant to explore the origins, values and purposes of their respective educational thought from a philosophical perspective. The educational thought of Confucius and Jesus is of fundamental importance to the development of Chinese and Western civilisations. Understanding the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus is of great relevance to the exchange of educational thought, educational practice and social life between Chinese and Westerners, and to their harmonious co-existence. It can also provide value for the exchange of different philosophical theories of education between the East and the West. Secondly, conducting a comparative study of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus is an important topic in the study of Confucianism and Christian civilisation, which is conducive to understanding the conflict and convergence of Confucian and Christian cultures from their origins. At the same time, China is at the stage of reforming its cultural and educational system. How to treat

traditional cultural education, how to view the convergence and collision of multiple cultures, and how to bridge the practices of Chinese and Western education are questions that urgently require the guiding philosophy of education to play a fundamental role in guiding educational practice. A comparative study of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus from a philosophical perspective will provide a reference value for the innovative development of traditional Chinese cultural education and the reform of the cultural and educational system at present.

The comparative analysis method focuses on understanding the meaning behind the text and extracting effective information from the content by conducting a meticulous textual analysis of all the information obtained. The educational ideas of Confucius and Jesus still have a great influence on contemporary education and are still an inspiration and guide for teaching methods and content. The development of modern education should incorporate the characteristics of both the East and the West, taking the best from the best and embracing cultural diversity [1]. Making changes through comparison will be conducive to the development of global education and the progress of human civilisation. A comparative analysis of the ideological essence, goals, methods and approaches of both education is conducted to gain further understanding of the two educational ideas and thus draw conclusions from the study. Finally, the analysis and comparison will lead to the inspiration of the two educational ideas for modern education in China.

2. Introduction of Confucius

2.1. Life of Confucius

The life of Confucius can be roughly divided into five stages: Youth, school founding, politics, travel, old age. Confucius (551 BC-479 BC), was a man who fled to a foreign country because of a struggle for power. He fled to a foreign country because of a struggle for power and struggled to survive with his mother. Afterwards, Confucius began to found schools, thus gaining fame. In 502 B.C. Confucius began his political career. Between the ages of fifty-five and sixty-eight, Confucius led his disciples on a tour of many countries, which had an important impact on his thinking. In his later years, Confucius continued his educational studies.

2.2. Background of His Educational Thought

The Spring and Autumn period in which Confucius lived was one of social and political chaos, with great changes between classes and poor social mores. It was a time of intensified social tensions and traditional social norms lost their binding effect on the people [2]. At the same time, the recruitment of scholars became popular and contributed to the development of science and the contention of a hundred schools of thought. Confucius was a representative of the 'scholar' class. He also had political aspirations, which he briefly implemented but to no avail, so he wanted to save society from chaos through education; to achieve moral government and moral rule through cultivating morality, and moral education became a central part of his education. Confucius ushered in a new era in the history of Chinese education, directly contributing to the widespread transmission of cultural scholarship and the rise of a scholarly class.

Confucius' approach to education was influenced by the culture of the Lu state, and his authority required a root guarantee, which was the ontological guarantee of 'heaven' [3]. Confucius taught to persuade his students of the conditions of the time, and his knowledge came from the influence of the culture of the time, in terms of political systems: the patriarchal system, the feudal system and the ritual and music system. The power to ensure the authority and legitimacy of the patriarchal, feudal and ritual and music systems naturally came from the 'Mandate of Heaven'. To this extent, the ontological guarantee of Confucius' philosophical thought on education can be regarded as 'heaven'.

3. Introduction of Jesus

3.1. Life of Jesus

Jesus, abbreviated from the Hebrew "Jeheshua" to "Jeshua". Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah in about 5 B.C. "in the days of King Herod" (Matthew 2:1). Around 28 AD (the 15th year of Tiberius' reign) Jesus met John, who preached the "kingdom of God" and called people to repentance, and baptised him, thus beginning his education. Jesus spent more than two years walking with his disciples in various parts of Palestine, gradually developing a distinctive style of teaching that had a profound impact. At the same time, he provoked great alarm among the other Jewish sects and the Roman authorities, and eventually, a head-on confrontation could not be avoided. Around 30 ADS, Jesus was executed by crucifixion for blasphemy.

3.2. The Origin of Christianity

The image of Jesus has also been portrayed in a variety of ways in the perspectives of ancient Jewry, Byzantium in Greece, medieval Rome, the German Reformation and modern Europe and America. The scholarly search for the historical truth about Jesus began with David Strauss's 1936 biography of Jesus, which portrayed Jesus as a religious leader, but this political ideology was not accepted by biblical critics of the period. Liberals saw Jesus as a moral model and teacher; historians of religion saw Jesus as the founder of Christianity who combined Jewish and Hellenistic ideas or as an unconscious 'messiah' who created a mystery religion [4]. Church historians consider Jesus to be the spiritual leader of the anti-Jewish anti-Snostics or a prophet who foretold the end times [5].

For the Jewish people, the function of the prophetic books is to call people back to the worship of Yahweh God, to strengthen national self-confidence, to unite the Jewish people and to give them hope for the end times. The political role of prophecy during the Tribulation period was far more important than the religious role, as is clearly evident in the Book of Isaiah. With the end of the captivity in the 6th century AD, the Jewish prophetic tradition faded away, and its demise stemmed from the growing dominance of orthodox Torah education and the emergence of a large number of Torah scholars who inherited the oral tradition of the Torah and continued the interpretation of the Law by the teachers. Jesus, reading from the Scriptures in the synagogue at the mouth of the Sabbath, may have regretted the demise of the prophetic tradition, but he was also excited by the inspiring prophecies of the prophets [6]. A different kind of legalistic education from the pedantic one gave him more freedom to think for himself. The distinctly rebellious political leanings of the Endeavour tax party were too costly. Jesus learned the lessons of this approach and in his missionary process, it was less a change about religion than a search for a balance between traditional beliefs and practical needs. When Jesus began his ministry at the age of thirty, he initially succeeded John in proclaiming the "kingdom of God" and "repentance", a clear edict that the authority of his preaching to the Judeans derived from the "God " guarantee.

4. Comparison of the Educational Thought of Confucius and Jesus

4.1. Traditional Educational Thinking

Confucius' and Jesus' understanding of the nature of education reflects the similarity in the development of human cognitive thinking. From the inheritance of traditional educational thought, there is a gradual shift to thinking about the realisation of human values. Confucius was so confident in his knowledge of the traditional culture that he advocated a return to the era of peaceful governance and the promotion and practice of traditional education, and on the basis of his inheritance of the concept of "heaven", he developed a more pronounced humanistic tendency, with more thinking about the human being, concentrated in the content of the educational thought of "benevolence and righteousness. This is reflected in the content of the educational thought of "benevolence and righteousness" [7]. The adaptation of Confucius' educational activities, both in terms of the content

of education and the resultant changes in the path of educational practice, suggest that Confucius cannot be positioned as a 'revivalist', but that this adaptation reflects a shift in his cognitive thinking, reflecting on the value of human beings and their realisation and transcendence in a specific social context. By the time Confucius devoted himself to educational activities in his later years, his strong desire for the political aims of education was rarely seen. Following his heart without violating the rules, he no longer provided political talents for the lords, but focused on the study and inheritance of traditional ideas [3].

Jesus' education was traditional Jewish and he studied the books of the law, the prophets and the history of the Jewish faith, and his idea of covenant education of "divine love" was an inheritance of the traditional Jewish faith. His educational practice had a historical basis and a deep popular foundation among the Jews, and in the face of Roman rule and the legalistic and dogmatic reality of the Jewish faith, he rethought the relationship between man and God and redefined the way in which man's value before God was to be realised [8]. It was a transformation of the way of thinking, where man no longer fulfilled the law mechanically, but was taught that there were more attributes of God's "love" than just these laws.

The conflict between the educational ideas of Confucius and Jesus is centred on the difference between the 'God-based' and 'human-based' traditions [9]. This is a conflict brought about by the difference in "traditions", which does not fade away with time, but may at times become more violently exclusionary. In the present context of globalisation, the clash of civilisations cannot only be solved by means of communication, it is not a theoretical but a practical issue, a practice of mutual tolerance and understanding and peaceful coexistence between people of different nationalities, regions and cultures. From Confucius onwards, the use of old-time rituals was essentially a way of guaranteeing social stability by emphasising a connection with history and using this connection as a guarantee of social stability. The hierarchical education of love and responsibility and a strong sense of family that came from Confucius maintains a sense of identity with the homeland even for the descendants of immigrants. For other ethnic groups, this cultural tradition of localism allows for Chinese historical and cultural continuity. At the same time, there is a rejection of foreign cultures, which is clearly evident in the course of the encounter between Buddhist, Islamic and Christian cultures and Chinese Confucianism [10]. Although this is a manifestation of cultural integration, this compromise of understanding in the context of different civilisations does not fundamentally eliminate the 'conflict' brought about by the differences in 'traditions'. Jesus taught that the Jewish faith tradition of the 'one God' could only worship the one 'Jehovah', and that any other idolatry was strictly forbidden and repudiated, which, according to the prophetic tradition, was punishable by death by stoning [11]. The traditional education inherited by Confucius had already depersonalised 'heaven' and emphasised the defence of the people through morality, which had already been a moral concept in the Spring and Autumn period. The patriarchal system determined the social structure of the family as the basic unit of ethics and morality, and the tradition of respect for ancestors and heirs constituted the basic ethical and moral principles of the Chinese nation. This led to a system of rituals and traditions in which humanistic concerns and political significance took precedence over religious worship. But for the tradition of worshipping the "one god" and seeing any other worship as idolatry, it was incomprehensible and unacceptable to worship the ancestors and kneel before the emperor. Now, the encounter with Confucianism in particular, after Christianity entered China, remains a difficult issue of the times. No matter how Confucius and Jesus or Confucianism and Christianity meet in the context of the times, they still cannot avoid the conflict brought about by the "traditional" God-based and human-based approach, the ethical conflict between "vertical order" and "horizontal equality". The ethical conflict between "vertical order" and "horizontal equality" cannot be avoided.

4.2. Aims and Values of Education

The educational thought of Confucius and Jesus embodies the pursuit of values and the setting of goals, and the recognition of the fulfilment of the human personality. This is the core similarity of educational thought. The value of the educational content of Confucius' "benevolence and

righteousness" is focused on the moral education of human beings, and Confucius recognises that "morality is teachable" and that "benevolence and righteousness" is about recognising and realising. In Confucius' view, this is the process of recognising and realising the "natural virtue" and fulfilling the "natural mission", which in Confucius' view is the "perfect" personality [7]. But he did not consider this to be an ideal; he wanted it to be realised. Confucius' educational activity was to "teach" people to become gentlemen. Jesus' education of "divine love", although conditional on God's love for man, did not leave man without any dignity or personality before God because of "sin" and passive compliance with the law [12]. He advocates a reinterpretation of the Law that essentially does not define God within the Law, and that man needs to take the initiative to understand and love the more comprehensive God. Mankind is not inferior because of the "sin" of Adam and Eve, but through the educational idea of "divine love," Jesus affirms the possibility of the fullness of human personality in the covenantal relationship between God and man. And as educational thought, the judgement of the perfection of the human personality is capable of far-reaching consequences. The core of the convergence of these two very different origins of educational thought, Confucius and Jesus, is inevitably found in the recognition of and aspiration to the perfection of human personality. Despite their different views on good and evil in terms of human nature, their educational thought inevitably addresses the goal and ideal of the perfection of human personality in the pursuit of value.

From a philosophical point of view, the understanding of the 'one world' and the 'two worlds' is an irreconcilable contradiction in their educational thought. For Confucius, the 'gentleman' is always a person with a 'natural mission', who knows and practices the 'natural virtues', and whose relationship with the 'heavenly "His relationship with heaven is not separate, but is unified in the "one world". Jesus' idea of the "Kingdom of God" came from the Jewish faith's teaching of the "Kingdom of Heaven", and over time the enslaved Jewish people would emerge with a "Messiah" to lead the "Chosen People". The promise of a "chosen people of God" who would overcome their oppressors and become the ruler of the rest of the nation. In Jesus the "kingdom of God" is expressed as "the kingdom of God in the heart", and if the "kingdom of God" of the ancient Jewish faith was still visible in the secular world, then Jesus. If the "kingdom of God" of the ancient Jewish faith was in the visible world, then the "kingdom of God" of Jesus has become another world that is difficult to understand and see [13]. In this way, people can perhaps better understand the parables that Jesus often used to tell his disciples about the "kingdom of God" in ways that were difficult for them to understand. This idea of the 'one world' and the 'two worlds' of Confucius' and Jesus' educational thought has continued to influence the formation of their respective national mindsets to this day.

4.3. The Ideal and Practice of Education

The convergence between the ideals and practices of Confucius' and Jesus' educational thought lies in their adherence to the spirit of tolerance and the consistency of their practical approach. The ideal of Jesus' education was that "all nations" should be saved and receive the way to eternal life [14]. The realisation of this ideal for the "nations" necessarily entails a spirit of tolerance different from that of the ancient Jewish people. The Jewish people, who considered themselves "God's chosen people", did not share their "God" so easily with the "Gentiles". Jesus was firmly opposed to pagan idolatry, but not to disrespecting pagan deities. The spirit of tolerance was readily accepted by Jews who were tired of internal factionalism, and Jesus' own ministry embodied the spirit of tolerance both in terms of who and where he preached. The educational ideal of Confucius was to educate his students with "benevolence". Confucius was engaged in the practice of education, and most of his disciples were trained in two important periods, namely the decade of forty-five to fifty-five. In his educational practice, Confucius educated students from all over the world, specialising in educational activities, and the scale of his schooling reached its peak. Although Confucius' educational activities were far longer than those of Jesus, he did not have a 'God-based' faith as Jesus did, and the content of the Analects shows that he was full of contradictions in terms of educational thought.

The fundamental conflict between the ideals and practices of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus lies in the question of how abstract principles are translated into the concrete world. For

Jesus' educational thought, which contains a whole set of interpretations of creation, there is a continuous and consistent account of the relationship between man and God [15]. However, neither the Three Kingdoms nor the pre-Qin dynasties had a Chinese canon that was as comprehensive as the Day Testament in its entirety about the relationship between man and God. There is something about "God", "the kingdom of God", "the people of the kingdom of heaven", "original sin", etc., like Jesus' When people did not see the "kingdom of God" that they had been waiting for, the Jewish prophets did so by referring to the "Messiah" who led them to victory "Messiah" as "God" [16]. In this way people rekindled their enthusiasm by virtue of the prophets' prophecies, but caused a waning of enthusiasm for the concrete world and laid the groundwork for theocracy. For Confucius, however, the universal virtue of "benevolence and righteousness" led to active participation in the concrete world in an ethical environment where the young and the old were ordered. The disciples, following the example of the sages, invoked principles such as the "Mandate of Heaven" that legitimised politics, but only as a form of ritual, not as an involvement in human affairs. For the Chinese, it is easy to accept the idea of the 'unity of heaven and man', because it is something that can be engaged with and perceived in the concrete world, and which together with man constitutes a harmonious atmosphere. But it is difficult for the Chinese to understand Jesus' statement that a disciple cannot be his disciple if he cannot love him more than his own family and his own life [4]. This is difficult for the Chinese to understand. But Christians are obliged to accept it, because the very foundation of pure faith is based on the distinction between the concrete world or being different from the secular world. Their paradise does not lie in the concrete world, but in the abstract "kingdom of God".

5. Implications for Modern Education in China

5.1. Reflections on Educational Thinking

Depending on the understanding of the source of educational thought, this can largely influence and determine the content and practice of educational thought. Therefore, the adaptation and change of methods are very important to the understanding of the essence of education [17]. Confucius' educational thinking, based on the inheritance and development of "heaven", was centred on "benevolence", which had a profound impact on the education of moral consciousness, social responsibility and the spirit of the gentleman. The content of Jesus' education on "divine love" is based on a subjective understanding of the core values of ancient culture in the face of social reality, which has led to the development of prophetic education, the basic spirit of the "people of the kingdom of heaven" and active "repentance". According to Confucius' and Jesus' level of understanding of the origins and their far-reaching influence on educational practice, their understanding of the origins of educational thought was a philosophical approach to change traditional thought in a way that was based on the current state of society. This change was not entirely dependent on political domination to construct a new culture so that it would not be politically struck down or destroyed because it conflicted with the idea of political domination. In essence, Confucius and Jesus reveal the underlying law that the connotations of 'heaven' and 'God' provide the impetus and legitimacy for educational practice [3]. Therefore, for contemporary education in China, whether it is a renewed emphasis on Confucius' educational thought or a reference to Jesus' educational thought, it is important to explore the underlying principles and laws behind their educational thought, rather than just the letter.

5.2. The Core of Educational Values

Educational value orientations have influenced the historical course of traditional culture and are needed to maintain social stability and development with a common value orientation [18]. It is necessary to reflect the universality and wholeness of educational values, as well as the affirmation and care for the dignity of the individual. Confucius' moral education made "benevolence and righteousness" a moral principle for all to learn, laying the foundation for the unity of thought in society as a whole. The basic value of this education was to develop benevolence and righteousness

into a comprehensive quality, providing the basis for traditional Chinese ethical thought [19]. The moral universality of Jesus' education of 'divine love' gives it a stronger appeal, and its central value is the affirmation of the value and dignity of the human person through 'divine love'. This is how Jesus' educational philosophy laid the foundations for the subsequent popular foundation of Christianity, with the fundamental spirit of "love and equality" revealing the greatest possible affirmation of human worth and dignity [20]. The education of human beings cannot avoid the concern for the ultimate in life, as Confucius' "elevating himself to make people happy" corresponds to his "natural mission", and Jesus sought the ultimate "way to eternal life" through the education of "divine love". Jesus sought the ultimate "way of eternal life" through the education of "divine love", both of which embody the ultimate concern for life [3]. The significance of this for the core values of contemporary education is that the development of educational thought and philosophy should not only be based on the current state of society, with a universal and holistic concern for the object of education, but also on the principle of affirming the dignity of the human person and realising the ultimate concern for life.

5.3. Educational Practice

The significance of the practice of the educational thought of Confucius and Jesus in terms of its impact on reality is twofold. The first is the universalisation of the object of education; the second is the adaptation of educational practices to individual differences, based on an understanding of the core values of education, in order to better achieve the all-round development of students [21]. Jesus in the eyes of the Chinese, like Confucius in the eyes of the general public in the West, became a tradition-maker from a pedantic moralist. The tradition of postmodernism is beginning to suggest new ideas for Western philosophy, and the 'deconstruction' of traditional Western philosophical foundations such as dualism and metaphysics has led to the dilemma of 'construction' again [22]. Some scholars have tried to draw some inspiration from the philosophy of Confucius in order to address the concerns of modern Westerners. In fact, this is an adaptation of scholars to the cultural differences between countries, and this adaptation is ultimately a solution to the crisis of human modernity through the pursuit of common values. The impact of the practice of educational thought on reality is the need to adapt education for people of different nationalities, regions and beliefs, rather than forcing all people into a single value system and practising a monolithic education practice. In this regard, there may be something to be learned from Confucius' "teaching to the individual" and "inspirational" approach to education, as well as from Jesus' "inspirational" approach to faith. When it comes to the question of education between East and West, "ideology" becomes a "boundary" for the exchange of educational ideas, but this "boundary" does not necessarily prevent the exchange of ideas. The key is to grasp and apply the principles and laws that drive the progress of human educational thinking in Chinese and Western educational thought from a philosophical point of view.

6. Conclusion

The borrowing of civilisations is a fundamental direction of human development, whether between two different civilisations or the history of the same civilisation, and how to learn from them has again become a very troubling dilemma for human society. In the context of globalisation, the exchange of educational ideas and cultures is necessary, but with boundaries. At a time when China is deepening its comprehensive reforms, the field of education has also begun reforms that are both institutional improvements and developments, and ideological adjustments and transformations. The emergence of new educational ideas and concepts must stand the test of practice, and in this process, it is necessary not just to think, but to analyse discursively and apply rationally the educational ideas and practices of the East and the West, both ancient and modern. Scholars hope that any comparative philosophy will trigger inspiration through the comparative study of other cultures of thought, revealing elements that current cultures have overlooked. The result of these convergences is not necessarily appropriate and must be understood dialectically. Therefore, a comparison of the

educational thought of Confucius and Yeshiva must look at their respective educational philosophies in a discursive manner, thus seeking to learn from them in terms of their origins, values and practices.

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