



A Comparative Look At Confucius, Plato And Buddhism Model Of Governance

Author: Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Associate Professor, Centre for Chinese & South East Asian Studies, School of Language Literature and Culture studies. Jawaharlal Nehru University , New Delhi

Abstract

In both Confucius' Analects and The Republic , both philosophers discuss the importance of good governance and the qualities a ruler must possess to rule the people. Confucius mentioned governance many times in his work The Analects and was asked by his students on multiple occasions what his thoughts were on governing and ruling. Once Confucius' student Ji Kangzi asked him about government. Confucius replied, "To govern is to correct. If you lead the people with correctness, who would not be corrected?" This is an example of a virtue that Confucius sees is important to ruling and why. The virtue of correctness and the actions that follow will lead the people to be correct and correct themselves. Confucius emphasizes how important having these virtues are in ruling when speaking to Ji Kangzi again. The verse reads "Ji Kangzi was troubled by the thieves in his state. He asked Confucius what he should do about it. Confucius replied, "If you weren't so greedy, your people wouldn't steal, even if you offered them a reward for doing it." This quote helps build a picture of what Confucius thought on Governance and ruling. To rule meant to exemplifying certain virtues while eschewing vices. We will look at quotes like these and build a succinct picture of Confucius' views on governance to compare to Plato.

Plato dedicated two chapters of his book The Republic to the question of that a philosopher is and what his use is in the world. Plato concluded that there are certain virtues that distinguish a philosopher from the common people. These virtues lead the philosopher to be of use in ruling the people. Plato saw that true philosophers love truth and wisdom while also hating untruths and lies. Plato saw the best kind of ruler was one who loved truth as much as one could love a good sight or sound. In The Republic the character Socrates is written saying as much as he talks to the character Glaucon, he says "Therefore the man who is really a lover of learning must from youth on strive as intensely as possible every kind of for truth." This man he describes is the philosopher. He writes later on in the chapter on why the philosopher is best fit to lead the people and rule them. He writes, as he is describing the allegory of The Ship of State, that "They don't know that for the true pilot it is necessary to pay careful attention to year, seasons, heaven, stars,

winds, and everything that's proper to the art, if he is really going to be skilled at ruling a ship.” The allegory of The Ship of State is that the philosopher has virtues and skills that allow him to flourish at ruling correctly. Like a ship that needs a knowledgeable and educated captain, the state needs a knowledgeable and capable ruler. We will explore the Ship of State allegory and other quotes from Plato as to give a clear picture of his philosophy and compare it to Confucius.

Our paper will focus on both these philosophers works and look for similarities and differences in their views on governance. We will be pulling our research from their respected works and show what each philosopher claimed was necessary to be considered a good ruler and what virtues were necessary to lead the people.

We will look at these quotes and more to compare the two philosophers and their ideals on ruling. We can already see that both see virtues as imperative to ruling. One must, for the peoples sake, carry with them the virtue of wisdom and ability to learn before they are truly capable to rule. Both Confucius and Plato emphasize the importance of ruling for the people instead of for the power. Both write on how important this ruler is to keeping the country and society moral and orderly. We will look to see where these ideas align and where they do not. Both of these philosophers did have incompatible ideas that do not match up in their writings. We will explore these differences and show how each school of thought came to difference conclusions with the same goal in mind, imagining the criteria for good ruling.

Key Words: Confucian Philosophy, Plato Philosophy and Buddhist Philosophy , comparative analysis , Governance.

Background:

Since the beginning of the civilisations , there is one common string which is bidding us together , is the quest for knowing and understanding each other, to create a harmonious world , where each individuals has liberty to live and express happily. We have been separated by gigantic mountains and vast oceans , however , there are concept such as “Universal love and Universal truth “ does exist in all kind of race ,caste , creed, religions ,gender and many more . One can find various commonalities and differences among all the civilization . It has been said that each religion , no matter believes in Idol worship or against the idol worship , it all propounds the love for humanity. Though, the path chosen by each religious doctrines are different ,but the common aim is to achieve ultimate happiness (Nirvana, Moksha, Salvation of the soul etc). The philosophies pounded by the various philosophers are the guiding “Path 道” which help a person to attended his /her ultimate goal. Untimate goals could only achieved if one follow the right path and discipline and support from the institutions such as family a, Society and the State. The success of family or any society is directly proportional to the the virtue and wisdom possessed by the head of that Institutions and its scholarship. Here , comes the role of the great philosophers of ancient times from East , West, North and South. It's the various philosophies that has created East and West as ‘Collective’ and “ Individual” Society. ‘Trolley Problem’ explains the clear understand of

the Collectives Vs individuals. The debate over “Rule of Virtue and Rule of Law” symbolizes the diversities of the culture existing on this planet. Debate of “Emptiness” “consciousness” “sub-consciousness” “sufferings and “joy” are the ultimate products of philosophical discourse. The field of Philosophy is so vast and diverse, it is not easy to look and compare in an article, however, this paper will try to look into the institutions which is instrumental in bringing order in the society, which results in bringing peace and tranquility in the given society. This paper is looking into the governance model of Confucius from East and Plato from the West. It would not be easy to ignore Buddhist Philosophy as it represents one of the oldest and living civilisations of the world. Buddhism as a religion and philosophy has influenced the various societies existing in this world.

It wouldn't be wrong to argue that the philosophies are the products of chaos and disturbances in the given society at a given point of time in history. Confucianism is the product of Warring State periods (战国时期/春秋时期), where people were undergoing suffering due to the wars and social exploitation by the feudal lords. People were craving for remedies, which can cure the disease and bring peace and harmony in the society. There comes the concept of 'Mandate of heaven 天下' and “天下一家”.

Governance Models:

The East and West both have a deep history of philosophers who have contemplated the issue of structuring and defining a good society. The problem of creating a better society has plagued the minds of many talented philosophers since antiquity. Two thinkers who have come to define the epitome of the Eastern and Western approach to this problem have been Confucius (551–479 BCE) and Plato (428–348 BCE). Both philosophers were firsthand witnesses of the failings of their time and used this experience and their wisdom to try and solve that problem of a flawed society. Both chose to envision a path forward with the idea of a ruler of virtue or Philosopher King. Confucius envisioned a society based on social harmony and balance, while Plato looked for a more structured approach to reach a harmonious society. While both thinkers focused on similar virtues, each gave their own prescriptions on how to achieve this perfect society. These philosophers focused on what they saw as the best influencer of society: government. If we look at these two philosophers' views on governance and compare their approaches to how societies should be structured, we should be able to gain a better understanding of the East and West. With a better understanding, we may be able to bridge the gap we see today between these societies.

Confucius on Governance:

The concept of governance is such a major component of Confucian thought due to its relationship to the concept of cultivation. Cultivation is the process of refining one's Character, which is said to be essential for becoming a Gentleman (君子 jūnzǐ). This refining is said to ultimately extend outward as one approaches this ideal model set forth by Confucius. The gentleman's natural influence is said to be like the Northern Star, guiding others and leading them to follow The Way (道 dào). This influence is said to come from the top-down in society, as the king is said to set an example for the people.¹ The Great Learning is one of the first books in the Confucian canon that discusses this fact, as it lists out the steps that would need to be taken in order to lead to a harmonious society. The Great Learning lays out the steps that should be followed to cultivate one's character and, once these steps are accomplished the commentary that follows expands upon it. The root of a just government is the virtue of the ruler himself, and although the people must cultivate themselves, they still must be led by a virtuous exemplar.² So, to understand Confucius's views on governance, it would be helpful to look at what Confucius saw as the virtues one should look to cultivate.

There are many virtues that Confucius described in his works, but there are those that Confucius saw as essential in order to be considered to be considered a gentleman. Since Confucius taught his students to strive to be the moral exemplar of the gentlemen, this is what we will use as a guide to virtue, as taught by Confucius. The gentleman is described as a person who has cultivated many virtues by discipline and study. Confucius described this person as having cultivated: Trustworthiness³, Humility⁴, Unbiased⁵, Sociable⁶, Wisdom⁷ and Self Introspection⁸. These virtues make up the gentleman that Confucius describes in the Analects.

With this understanding of the gentleman, we can see that Confucius sets a high bar for a virtuous person. On multiple occasions, Confucius points to past rulers for examples of what a virtuous person looks like⁹. This reiterates Confucius's view that a ruler should exemplify the virtues of the past and present to educate the people. For the society to become harmonious, all should treat the cultivation of these virtues as their

¹ The Master said: "If you govern with the power of your virtue, you will be like the North Star. It just stays in its place while all the other stars position themselves around it. (Analects 2.1)

² The Way is to win the people, then win the country. If you lose the people, you lose the country. Therefore, the ruler must be concerned about his own virtue first. If he has virtue, he will have the people. If he has the people, he will have the land. If he has the land, he will have wealth. If he has wealth, he will be able to function. (Great Learning Sec.B Verse 13)

³ The Master said "...he is diligent in his work and careful in speech. He avails himself to people of the Way and thereby corrects himself." (Analects 1.14)

⁴ The Master said: "The noble man is humble in his speech but superb in his actions." (Analects 14.27)

⁵ The Master said: "The noble man is all-embracing and not partial. The inferior man is partial and not all-embracing." (Analects 2.14)

⁶ The Master said: "The noble man is firm in his positions but does not wrangle. He readily makes friends but doesn't belong to a clique." (Analects 15.22)

⁷ Analects 14.28

⁸ The Master said: "The noble man seeks within himself. The inferior man seeks within others." (Analects 15.21)

⁹ Analects 8.19-21

goal.¹⁰ The example the ruler sets is essential to the society because it instills virtues on the populous. Confucius theorized that if the ruler were able to teach the populous such virtues, the society would run smoothly, as long as the populous fulfilled their roles. Confucius referred to these roles and their importance when discussing the idea of Rectifications of Names.

The Rectification of Names is discussed by Confucius as the simple concept of words meaning what they describe. This relates to ruling because there is a set of expectations for each role in society, and if one were to occupy a role then one must meet those expectations. For example, a father is expected to teach the son and be an example to him. If a father does not give instructions to his son then he would not be fulfilling the role of a father. Once the expectations were understood and fulfilled throughout society, harmony would be realized. These roles ranged from the bottom to the top. From the son to the ruler all must fulfill their role and understand their place in society. The ruler must fulfill their duties as a ruler and follow The Way. He is expected to follow the Way as a junzi is expected to.

This way of producing a harmonious society is a natural approach. There is no direct law or policy that is offered by Confucius from his views on law and order. Confucius saw laws as a an ideal way to have people avoid openly committing crimes but not truly changing their character. ¹¹ Confucius saw the major concern of the rulers was to be virtuous and cultivate virtue². Although Confucius did not require any specific laws there were some actions that would need to be taken by the ruler to facilitate this natural change in society. For one the ruler should look to rectify music and rituals to align with The Way. This is not so much a restriction or promotion of laws but more a ruler promoting cultural ideals like music and rituals. This approach is one that looks to make the government a model for the citizenry in not only the ethical sense but also cultural sense. Both would feed the other, as the ethics of the Way would influence the culture so would the culture help point one towards the Way.

To summarise , Confucius three important concept of 《利》¹², 《天命》¹³, 《仁》¹⁴ theory to establish harmony in the society , which then were engaged in war and destructions became instrumental in bringing order in the Chinese society of that period. His importance of natural virtue over cultivated through training brought confidence in the common gentry , which had lost the hope of future growth in ones life. Only the elites to be precise warlords and their kins could only become the ruler or the ministers in imperial ,feudal China. Its the mandate of heaven not the people decides its future ruler and

¹⁰ "From the king down to the common people, all must regard the cultivation of the self as the most essential thing." (Great Learning a 6)

¹¹ The Master said: "If you govern the people legalistically and control them by punishment, they will avoid crime, but have no personal sense of shame. If you govern them by means of virtue and control them with propriety, they will gain their own sense of shame, and thus correct themselves." (Analects 2.3)

¹²孔子, “君子喻于义, 小人喻于利”、“放于利而行, 多怨”。⁵ 这是孔子作为一个谦谦君子的一种姿态, 也反映了他的时代和阶级局限 in 徐大同, “孔子仁政, 德治, 礼范的治国之道”*Journal of the History of Political Thought*, Vol.4, No1. 2013.

¹³他说, “死生有命, 富贵在天”⁸, 人的一切事都要顺天知命, 所谓“天命不可违”, 一切只能听天由命徐大同, “孔子仁政, 德治, 礼范的治国之道”*Journal of the History of Political Thought*, Vol.4, No1. 2013.

¹⁴孔子所强调的“仁”, 从人, 从二。就是说治理国家关键是要处理好人与人之间的关系问题 in 徐大同, “孔子仁政, 德治, 礼范的治国之道”*Journal of the History of Political Thought*, Vol.4, No1. 2013.

that rulers can only continue till it has the will of the heaven. It also discourages the ruler to become rogue and anti people. His teachings were more human centric as compared to the other philosophers in the different part of the world.

Plato on Governance

Plato illustrated his model of the most just city in his work *The Republic*. He explained his views in dialogues between Socrates and multiple Athenians, each discussing different subjects that all coalesce into Plato's model of the just city. This "just city" is said to be ruled by a philosopher, or an existing ruler who becomes a philosopher¹⁵. To clarify what he means by philosopher, Plato explains who he considers to be a true philosopher and what virtues they have. He sets them apart from those who claim to be philosophers by describing these virtues. A true philosopher is one who Desires Wisdom¹⁶, Loves Truth/Hates Untruths¹⁷, is Moderate¹⁸, is Courageous¹⁹, has Good Memory²⁰, and is Charming²¹. Plato sees these virtues as essential for a philosopher and would serve them well in ruling a city in the direction of truth.

Plato proposed that these virtues must be understood by the philosopher in their complete form. This highlights an important characteristic of Plato's philosophy, that being the theory of the forms. Plato understood that these virtues and other ideas that we see and think of are forms. Forms are the ultimate version of the idea or object. Beauty for example is a form and what we see as beautiful is only a shadow of the form itself. To truly understand beauty, it is not enough to know what things are beautiful, but to know what the concept is itself. The same applies to goodness which Plato says is essential to being a philosopher. It is only after knowing the form of goodness can one be considered a philosopher. He expands on this concept with his allegory of the Sun. He describes the allegory as such: to understand something, and see it we need sight and light to behold it. Without light we would not be able to see it or know what it is. The sun shines on objects and illuminates it so we might see it. The sun itself is not sight but it gives us sight. The Form of the Good is the thing that illuminates what is good.²² A true philosopher would know the form of the good instead of the things that it illuminates.

¹⁵ "The philosophers rule as kings or those now called kings and chiefs genuinely and adequately philosophize, and political power and philosophy coincide" (The Republic 473c-d)

¹⁶ "Won't we also then assert that the philosopher is a desirer of wisdom, not of one part and not another, but of all of it" (The Republic 475 b)

¹⁷ "No taste for falsehood; that is, they are completely unwilling to admit what's false but hate it, while cherishing the truth." (The Republic 485 a)

¹⁸ "Such a man is, further, moderate and in no way a lover of money." (The Republic 485 c)

¹⁹ So, a cowardly and illiberal nature would not, as it seems, participate in true philosophy. (The Republic 486 a)

²⁰ Let us never, then, admit a forgetful soul into the ranks of those that are adequately philosophic; in our search, let us rather demand a soul with a memory. (The Republic 486 d)

²¹ "Is there any way, then, in which you could blame a practice like this that a man could never adequately pursue if he were not by nature a rememberer, a good learner, magnificent, charming, and a friend and kinsman of truth, justice, courage, and moderation?" (The Republic 487 a)

²² "I suppose you'll say the sun not only provides what is seen with the power of being seen, but also with generation, growth, and nourishment although it itself isn't generation." (The Republic 509 b)

This allegory is incorporated into another allegory Plato uses to illustrate how the philosopher uses their grasp of the Form of Good to help guide the people. The allegory is written as such: there are human beings fixed to a wall in a cave. They have been fixed to the wall their entire life and have only been able to see the world through shadows cast on the wall. They only know what they see until one is released from his bonds and is able to see outside the cave. He sees the world as it is and returns to the cave to tell his fellow prisoners of the world outside the cave. He would find difficulty in convincing his fellow prisoners of leaving because of the acclimation to the light and its effect on his sight. They would say he is corrupted and they would fear leaving the cave. With this allegory, Plato reiterates that a philosopher, the prisoner who leaves the cave, gains an understanding of the truth and looks to share it with others. The light that flows into the cave is like the sun from the earlier analogy: it gives illumination to things.

This form of the good is what is central to Plato's view of the philosopher and his reasoning for why philosophers are best to rule. Philosophers are able to understand in the most perfect way what truth is and what good is. With those skills one would be able to lead a state with direction and authority. Their rule would be most just because they would have a complete understanding of the Form of Justice. Although they have a complete understanding, this does not mean they will be elected just based on their merit. This is due to the fact that philosophers are seen as useless to the citizenry. For this reason, Plato uses an allegory to illustrate his view of why philosophers should be considered for the position of ruler. The allegory of The Ship of State is as such: a shipowner is looking for a pilot for his ship and encounters a large number of men vying for the position, each extolling their skill with the craft of sailing. The men fight vigorously for the position, even using drinks and drugs to persuade the shipowner. The men and shipowner dismiss the navigator as a candidate as they see him as a useless stargazer. Plato claims that this stargazer is the best fit to sail the ship as he is the one who knows the stars and seasons.²³

These complete understandings are said to be taught at an early age to Athenian citizens. This is where we get the first look at what policies Plato sees as vital to building this "just city." Plato states that the Philosopher King would be picked from a class of people he calls "The Guardians." These citizens will be raised from birth for the purpose of protecting the city, serving as an educated army. Their education would consist of Dialectics, Mathematics²⁴, and Gymnastics²⁵. Those who show promise in philosophy will be the ones who are further taught on matters of politics and ruling. These exceptional guardians will be the ones chosen to lead as Philosopher Kings.

To summarise, the ruler is not decided by its natural virtue or talents, on contrary he has to be trained in a particular environment that can make him fit to become the king. This concept goes against the principle of natural justice and equal opportunities given to an individual. It also encourages class in the society, which is more discriminatory in any period of time in history or in contemporary society.

²³ "They don't know that for the true pilot it is necessary to pay careful attention to year, seasons, heaven, stars, winds, and everything that's proper to the art, if he is really going to be skilled at ruling a ship." (The Republic 488 d-e)

²⁴ "The lowly business," I said, "of distinguishing the one, the two, and the three. I mean by this, succinctly, number and calculation" (The Republic 522b)

²⁵ "And gymnastic, of course, is wholly engaged with coming into being and passing away. For it oversees growth and decay in the body." (The Republic 521 e)

Rule with Virtue

Both Confucius and Plato agreed on the fact that the leader of a country should carry himself in a virtuous manner. This aligning of values is where we can see a similarity form between the East and West. Both see virtue as something inherent to good ruling. Both philosophers understood that a country needs a ruler who can set an example for the populous to follow and understand the art of bringing people together in spite of existing differences between them.

While Confucius focused on virtues of character, such as trustworthiness and wisdom, Plato focused more on characteristics such as loving truth and having good memory. These differences in types of virtues lead to differences in the type of ideal societies both were working to build. Confucius worked to build a society with established roles and expectations for the citizenry. One where citizens are expected to work on themselves by study and following the example of their superiors to gain these virtues. Plato imagined a society where the work of refining ones character and obtaining virtues is established in ones upbringing. The citizenry is taught by the state from birth.

These differences do not exclude the possibility of positive connections that can be made between the two schools of thought. Both schools acknowledge the importance of cultivation and working towards a goal of idealism. Both set out an ideal that the citizenry can look towards. These virtues are noble and arguable positive for any human to strive to obtain. With this commonality we can see that both schools point humans in the direction of wisdom and good. While these philosophers would not have agreed on every virtue that the other espoused, they would have agreed that virtue and the strive for it is important for society and its rulers.

Implementing Harmony

Both philosopher believed that harmony in society was possible by effective rule. Where the ideals diverge is the means in which to enact the changes needed to see harmony come to fruition. Confucius saw the virtuous ruler to have the effect of educating the populous just by being virtuous and leading them to do the same by natural force. Plato saw the educating effect to happen by law and use of policy to enact change in the people. While both taught that similar virtues are needed, they both differed on how harmony in society would be gained by having this ruler.

Confucius did not give any sort of policy prescription, because he relied on the natural force that would come from the ruler's virtuous character. He did give a prescription but it was not to be carried out by the state but instead by the individual. The individual had the ownership over their education. Although the individual is to be assisted by others, they still are the ones to put their focus on cultivation. The ruler is to teach the people but they are themselves supposed to receive this teaching and apply with thoughtfulness. It is not just direction from the ruler to follow certain prescriptions, it is instead that the ruler is to show how to obtain the virtues. The ruler shows how one acts in their role and leads his subordinates.

Plato saw the state itself as the educator of the people. One's upbringing would be handled by the state and that is where you would learn about virtues and education. This way of teaching virtues relies heavily on the fact that the ruler, the one dictating this education, does in fact have the best intentions for the people in mind. This means that the state is given the power directly to influence the people and guide them towards a virtuous life and harmony. Plato's trust in the state is radically different from Confucius as it takes cultivation out of the hands of the individual and community.

Confucian and Plato theory of Governance model in comparison of other philosophy existed in other parts of the world. Especially, Buddhist Philosophy, which has influenced and widely received in China and other parts of the world.

Buddhism on Governance:

*"It must be remembered that the Buddha was born into a society which, comparatively speaking, was politically advanced and through the ages had developed certain very solid ideas of government. In the Manu Neeti or the Code of Manu, the Hindus already had laws hallowed by time to guide them in their civic duties. . . . These laws discussed not only the rights of the rulers, but also their duties towards their subjects. They also discussed the obligations of the subjects and their rights"*²⁶

The above quotes is indicative of the existence of law and principle for ruler to rule its subjects and the obligations of the king towards his subjects much before the origin of the Buddhism and its philosophy. Buddhism is believed to be the product of the prevailing discriminations in the Hindu society in form of Caste and Class. The exploitation of lower caste "Dalits/shudras" by the upper and influential caste in India. It was assumed that humans are by birth bad and uncivilised like wild animals and they need to be tamed and civilised. The rules should use all the means of punishments, rewards etc to bring order in the society. However, the rule itself became controversial if the people behind formulating the rules aspires for their personal / class or caste interests. Buddhist philosophy argues that all human beings are born equal and one should not be discriminated on the basis of caste, class, gender etc. It believes that the animals in the forest/wild live in harmony and understand the value of peace and tranquility.

²⁶Vitanage, Gunaseela. . *Buddhist Ideas in Government*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2011.

In line with Buddhist principles:

The virtuous king should practice dana or charity, giving alms to the poor and gifts to those who serve the kingdom well.

The virtuous king should practice priyavacana or kind speech, never using unkind words or harsh speech with anyone.

The virtuous king should cultivate artha cariya, which means acting in the spirit of service as well as living a simple and frugal life.

The virtuous king should cultivate samanatmata, which means equality. Despite being in an exalted position, the king must never feel himself to be superior to the least of his subjects.

The virtuous king should learn to dispense justice to all his subjects without fear or favor.

To summarise , Buddhist propounds the theory of equality , universal love , respect , compassion , benevolence for each other . The rulers should possess all these qualities to become ruler. Buddhism also talked about the ideal situation but it can be relea

Conclusion

These two thinkers set the foundation that two societies have built their government and societies on to this day. With their respected theories they have influenced how the East and West look at ethics and governance today. The issues we see today between these two realms can be looked at as a deterioration of influence these ideals have had in the last century. Not only have Plato and Confucius been relegated to the past but they have had their place in these societies reimaged.

The West has slowly gained an opinion of philosophy that Plato himself witnessed, that of philosophy being worthless thinking and a useless profession. The West has all but cast aside the lessons that Plato taught. Virtue and the understanding of it are not revered as they once were. Plato taught why this is dangerous with the analogy of the Ship of State. While the shipowner might be convinced by words and deception, the truly qualified one is the one who seems the most useless because of his wisdom in navigation. This sadly has happened in the West because of the deterioration of this knowledge, the most knowledgeable ones in ruling and philosophy have been relegated to the tile of useless.

The East has seen a similar deterioration of appreciation of philosophy. The Confucian ideals set forth by the master have seen a decline in understanding by the populous. Though the lesson live on in the culture, the understanding has been lost due to time and interactions with the West. It is not enough to know of the virtues and roles that Confucius taught, it is important to understand them and their importance. Confucius taught that it is not enough to know something, it is better to understand it and put it into practice. This is what the East is missing today, the understanding that comes with cultivation.

It can be further argued that the world has witnessed en -numbers human catastrophe in form of natural calamity, wars and other destructions, but the philosophies and teaching propounded by the Confucius and Plato on governance is still relevant and imprints can be seen in various contemporary societies of the world. The only need of the hours is to learn and understand the essence

of Buddhist philosophy , which can be argued has elements of Confucius and Plato positive formulations about the making of the rulers . However, it can't be denied the facts that these two philosophers were silent on part of gender and class issues and to more importantly caste discrimination ,prevalent in the society of that time.

What can we do to mend this deterioration is simple as it was proposed by both of these philosopher, understanding. We must look to understand these two thinkers and the ideals they espoused. We must not only understand whichever one founded our respective society but we must also understand the other as well. The East and West can return to their former glory and more by re-educating their respective citizenry in their history and the others. The East and West must open a dialogue on what their respective schools of thought taught and how these ideals could work in tandem to build a better world. Both thinkers had the flourishing of humanity in mind, that alone is a commonality that can help mend a broken relationship like the East and the West have. As understanding is expanded and dialogues are allowed to flourish, we can start to rebuilding the ideals that these thinkers saw as essential to harmony.

At the end the core difference between the three philosophies are Confucianism talks about the human relationship , Plato talks about the Institutions and Buddhism talks about humanity . It can be only possible if each country start promoting People to people Exchange “人文交流”。 These Three philosophies need to be understood and its basics tenets should be introduced in various academic curriculum of institutions across the globe , so that the younger generations especially the Youth know and understand about the glorious past of different civilization and learn from them to bring harmony in the society worked to build a Community with a shared Future for Mankind and relied the dream of “天下一家”。

References:

1. Ther Miller, A. C. (1992, July 4). The Great Learning. Resources for East Asian Language and Thought. In <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/greatlearning.html>.
2. Muller, A. C. (n.d.). Analects of Confucius 論語. Resources for East Asian Language and Thought. <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/analects.html>.
3. Plato & Bloom, A. (1968). The Republic. Basic Books. 0-465-06935-5
4. 徐大同 , “孔子仁政 , 德治 , 礼范的治国之道”Journal of the History of Political Thought ,Vol.4, No1. 2013.
5. Changzheng Dai, “A Comparison of the Political Thoughts of Confucius and Plato” in G.P. Prastacos et al. (eds.), Leadership through the Classics,DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-32445-1_12, # Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2012

6. Elena Avramidou, Sage-King and Philosopher-King: A Political and Moral Approach to Confucius' and Plato's Leadership" in G.P. Prastacos et al. (eds.), Leadership through the Classics, DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-32445-1_4, # Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2012
7. Tao LIANG and Ian M. SULLIVAN, "Political Thought in Early Confucianism" Frontiers of Philosophy in China Vol.5. No.2, June 2010.
8. Vitanage, Gunaseela. . Buddhist Ideas in Government. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2011.

