Abstract

The Impact of Taoism in the Modern World

This study focuses on the description of the Taoism's impact in the modern world as a phenomenon, and the examination of the two related underlying issues. The first is the reasons behind the rise of the Taoism in relation to its impact in the modern world. The second is the criteria required in justifying the relationship between Taoism and the different realms of modern civilization which impact it has over.

As the definition of Taoism is itself a controversial issue; therefore, in order to narrow down the scope of discussion and to reach a conceptual standardization, the term "Taoism" used in this study has been limited to Lao-tzu's thoughts. Materials used were mainly gathered from books and periodicals. Care was taken in selecting materials so that information relating to Taoist philosophers other than Lao-tzu was excluded.

The results of this study indicate the importance of Taoism in the modern world. This can be seen through the impact it has over the vast and diverse realms of modern civilization. This in return initiated discussions on the two issues stated above. Findings to the first issue show that despite the unique reason behind each individual impact, the main reason that helps to bring about Taoism's rise still lies in the versatility of Lao-tzu's thoughts, which appeals readily to each individual's needs. As for the second discussion, results indicate that conformation to Lao-tzu's doctrine of zi-ran (自然) and wu-wei (无为) is one of the most important criteria required in the justification process.

This study is by no means complete. The topic covers an extensive area including the modernization of Taoism and the significance of Taoism to the modern world, which are to be further examined.