

# *Research on Fan Zhongyan's Buddhism and Taoism Thoughts*

**Junying Zhang\***

*Liupanshui Normal University, Liupanshui 553001, Guizhou, China*

*\*corresponding author*

**Keywords:** Fan zhongyan, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Ethos connoted.

**Abstract:** Fan Zhongyan, as a great scholar of his generation, He often studied Buddhist scriptures in his spare time, With high theoretical knowledge and extraordinary insights, He incorporated Buddhist ideas into Confucianism and Taoism, Enrich Confucianism, supplement Taoism, In the integration, complementarity and influence of the three religions, we should constantly cultivate our body and mind, strengthen our cultivation and improve our realm. Seek a kind of synthesis, balance and development. It embodies the sorrow and compassion for the universe and social life, Pioneered the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, Melting Confucianism and Buddhism in one furnace, Make every effort to persuade the good of the world, the way of scholarly study.

## **1. Introduction**

Fan Zhongyan (989—1052), Character Mr Wen, Famous statesman, strategist, thinker, educator and writer in Chinese history, He was posthumous as "Wenzheng" and also known as "Fan Wenzheng Gong". Fan Zhongyan's life, famous heavy bamboo and silk; Achievement article, recite through the ages; Personality and morality, famous in history; Ambitious feelings, the longterm beans. Is a rare, outstanding, outstanding and far-reaching figure in Chinese history<sup>[1]</sup>. In Buddhism, Taoism has a high accomplishment, created the integration of Confucianism and Buddhism, compatible with Buddhism and Taoism, integration of Confucianism and Buddhism in a furnace, and strive to apply the road of learning.

After Buddhism was introduced into China in the Han Dynasty, it mixed with Taoism and Confucianism. Since the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties, there has been a trend of integration of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. But at that time, it was still showing both coexistence and independence. Due to the heavy emphasis on the study of chapters and sentences in Han Confucianism, the development of Confucian classics became rigid, while Buddhism took the opportunity to develop greatly. In the Tang Dynasty, Buddhism's doctrine prevailed and surpassed Confucianism. In the Tang dynasty, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism both excluded each other and merged with each other gradually, but it was not until the Song dynasty that Confucianism completed the new academic system.

## **2. Integration of Confucianism, Buddhism Compatible with the Buddha's Path**

The Song Dynasty was an era when Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism merged together, Song Dynasty scholars are knowledgeable, not only proficient in Confucian classics, but also have high Cultivation of Buddhism and Taoism. Fan Zhongyan showed extraordinary erudite and studied

the classics of the three religions, striving to combine Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Just as his poem "To Mr. Zhang" said, "Raising records and learning floating hills", "The quiet road is self-generated", "Reading Yi, dreaming of Duke Zhou"<sup>[2]</sup>, It embodies the academic bearing and mind of embracing and embracing the three religions. He created a melting of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism in a furnace of research. If the study of Yi is the philosophical basis of Fan Zhongyan's academic thought, the study of Classics is the value orientation of Fan Zhongyan's academic thought. Then Buddhism and Taoism became Fan Zhongyan's conversion to strengthen his self-cultivation and enhance his personality realm.

In his early years, Fan Zhongyan went to Study in Liquan Temple, and had a close relationship with Buddhism and Taoism. From Hunan Anxiang xingguo Taoist Taoist enlightenment teacher sima, influenced by Taoism and "Lao Zhuang" thought, in Taoism is very self-cultivation. Fan Zhongyan advocated frugality, tolerance of poverty, pure desire, quiet and indifferent, qigong health care, daoshu health care treatment, which shows that he was deeply influenced by Taoist thoughts. As Fan Zhongyan's Book of Zhongshe: "Tao Shu says: Eat light dry things, cover the spleen also"; "Ease of mind in everything" is also the Taoist way to keep healthy. Fan Zhongyan in the hao state "too Clear palace" poetry cloud: "who said immortal way to seek difficult, since the kui Yin product is not much". Fan Zhongyan "Lao Zi Youlong Fu" deep Taoist home purist, multiple people did not say meaning. "The treasure of everlasting thrift" and "the source of purity" illustrate the thoughts of Lao Tzu. In the treatment of Taoism, Fan Zhongyan adopted a very rational attitude, In "On the near Name", he criticizes Lao Zhuang's view of "doing good without near name" and "making people weaker than name but keeping the truth".

Buddhism was very popular and influential in the Song Dynasty, Ouyang Xiu said in the Imperial Book Pavilion: "The learning of the husband and the Buddha has been going on for a long time...Both of them are rebuked by my scholars....However, Buddha can interfere with human life, but drum with misfortune and happiness, human interest is always popular."<sup>[3]</sup> As a Buddhist believer, Fan Zhongyan communicated with many mages and monks and sang poems throughout his life. The depth of his Buddhist cultivation is also amazing, Fan Zhongyan's Buddhist thought profoundly shows the Buddhist concept of "everything is empty" and "positive birth".

The Teachings of Buddhism, such as "great compassion" and "Buddha nature for goodness and universal salvation", influenced the formation of Fan Zhongyan's sense of distress. American Sinologist Wright believed that Fan Zhongyan's famous saying of "sorrow before joy" came from the Bodhisattva of Mahayana Buddhism <sup>[4]</sup>. Since the Buddhist Mahayana advocates equality of all beings, Consider all living things one, The so-called "unity great compassion", To advocate broad compassion for the benefit of all things, Eliminate the bitterness of resolving troubles and poisons, To feel the beauty of life, Feel the happiness of life. This has something in common with fan Zhongyan's spirit of "sorrow before joy". All his life, Fan Zhongyan has always been a doer of deeds and truly practiced the Confucian spirit of "universal charity" and the Buddhist spirit of "no great kindness, unity and great compassion".

### 3. Study Buddhism and Compassion

Fan Zhongyan, as a great Confucian, believed in Confucianism and advocated learning. Unlike Ouyang Xiu and Li Gou, who rejected Buddhist teachings, more appreciation and absorption, He showed his confidence in the authenticity of Confucianism and his tolerance to paganism. In his spare time, Fan zhongyan often read Buddhist classics and put forward his own views on Buddhism. Fan Zhongyan read the Diamond Sutra and tasted it. In the early qingli periods, Fan Zhongyan was ordered to pacify Hedong. During the journey, I got a volume of "Ode to the Cause and Effect of the Arhats", the title reads "Translated by The Indian Samana Jayrajendra", it is the dharma of the

arhats who recited the Buddha and said the cause and effect of good and evil. (Cause, cause; What goes around comes around; The man of knowledge is all from his own heart; See the person, see the nature.) In XVI, the Arhats, each of whom is also called Monara, speak of his proven "vision of cause and effect." Each has seven verses, making a total of one hundred and twelve verses. After Fan Zhongyan read, the method is full of joy, special order circulation praise, then ordered the Fuzhou Chengtian Temple monks refuge in other records of Tibet, Xiao Zhu did not hear.

Fan Zhongyan said in "Sixteen Arhat Ode to Cause and Effect": "I tasted the Buddhist Tripitaka. From heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, fine and insects, all kinds of good instructions, enlightenment lost. But the knot is deep and high, with evil and good, see the heart of less sex. Therefore, The Buddhas kept their teachings, and the ancestors made their vows to help the people and fulfill their great wishes." [2]. It can be seen that Fan Zhongyan studied the books of Confucianism, Buddhism and Buddhism, and deeply acquired the ways of sages. "They all point to the source of life and death, the method of deep Chen Xin nature, open the ding Hui true Ming zong, in addition to the pain of trouble and poison; Jinsheng abstain from killing, lure good and dispel evil. All dharma paths, converging on goodness." [2]. Therefore, Fan Zhongyan "a sigh, a song a realization, and even the end of the book, suddenly felt the heart of the world, a great understanding. This would not have happened if the Venerable One had not been blessed by the six links of enlightenment." [2].

From this preface, fan Zhongyan's sorrow and compassion for the universe and social life are reflected. It reveals his attitude towards Buddhism and his admiration. Have a fairly objective and correct understanding of Buddhist fundamentalism and its characteristics, He spoke highly of Buddhism, Summarizes the characteristics of Buddhism, this is also where Buddhist teachings and Confucianism are closely aligned and connected. Such an attitude towards Shi Lao also determined that Fan Zhongyan could not make a real and substantial contribution to the revival of Confucianism in the Northern Song Dynasty.

#### **4. Confucianism and Buddhism Complementary, Cultivate the Mind and Body**

Like many ancient sages and sages, Fan Zhongyan had the lofty ideal of "to the emperor, Yao and Shun, and to make the customs chun". [5] However, the darkness of realistic politics and the ups and downs of officialdom made Fan Zhongyan want to retire. This is the contradiction between "helping the world" and "staying aloof", "being loyal to the king and loving the country" and "retiring to seek a better life" that any upright scholar-bureaucrat would encounter in China's feudal era. The conflict between ideal and reality, the contradiction between "temple" and "jianghu", the trade-off between advance and retreat, It was fully reflected in the ideological struggle of Fan Zhongyan. From the perspective of fan Zhongyan's life, the former always beats the latter, And practice, for the country for the people, Benedict good behavior, aid the poor, sympathizing with the army and the people, countless examples. Fan Zhongyan always cultivated his body and mind, strengthened his cultivation and improved his realm in the integration, complementation and influence of the three religions, and sought for a kind of synthesis, balance and development.

Fan Zhongyan did not worship Buddhism and was not an ingratiating Buddha. Their stance on Buddhism was different from that of later neo-confucianists who absorbed Zen and supplemented Confucianism. More because of the Confucian orthodox position of the politicians attach great importance to practical, advised the good way of helping the world. To be independent of external objects and circumstances, To look at the development of Buddhism from a rational and practical Confucian standpoint, Remain sincere, pure, equal, righteous and compassionate.

Fan Zhongyan pioneered the revival of Confucianism in the Song Dynasty, and carried forward Confucianism all his life. Deeply influenced by the complementary thought of Confucianism and

Buddhism in the Song Dynasty, he unconsciously showed great affection, accept some Buddhist teachings, Enrich Confucianism, supplement Confucianism and Taoism, cultivate sentiment. "Enlightenment comes to all living beings; A thought to the Buddha sentient beings. One flower creates a world, and one leaf creates a tathagata. In spring, flowers turn green, and in autumn, leaves fade away. Infinite prajna is at ease, silent and dynamic." Constantly improve their own personality cultivation and ideological realm.

## 5. Conclusion

Fan Zhongyan neither worshipped nor fawned on Buddhism. He viewed the development of Buddhism from a rational and practical Confucian standpoint. He is not only proficient in Confucianism, but also highly educated in Buddhism and Taoism. Integrating Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, Incorporating Buddhist ideas into Confucianism and Taoism, To enrich Confucianism and supplement Confucianism and Taoism, Make every effort to communicate and advise the good to serve the world, Always in the integration of the three religions, complementary, influence constantly improve cultivation, seeking a kind of neutralization.

## References

- [1] Zhang Junying, Liu Shuqiong, Zou Xuan. *Review of fan zhongyan's military thoughts in the past fifty years. Journal of liupanshui normal university*, 2018, 30(02):71-75.
- [2] (Song) Fan Zhongyan. *Fan Zhongyan complete Works. Li Yongxian, Wang Ronggui, point correction. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2007.*
- [3] (Song) Ouyang Xiu. *The Complete Works of Ouyang Xiu • Lay Scholars (Vol.39) • Imperial Book Pavilion. Li Yi'an, point school. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2001:567.*
- [4] Yu Ying Shi. *Scholars and Chinese Culture. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1987:520.*
- [5] (Tang) Du Fu. *Du Fu's poetry collection. Shenyang: Wan Volume Publishing Company, 2016:24.*