

Confucius said, "With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow; I have still joy in the midst of these things. Riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness, are to me as a floating cloud." –Book 7, Chapter 16, The Analects-trans. James Legge

Confucius and Thomas Aquinas on Happiness and Education

-Jeong-Kyu Lee, Ph.D.-

<Abstract>

The purpose of this article is to investigate the happiness principles and the educational aims of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas. To discuss this study logically, three research questions are addressed. First, what are the principles of happiness of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? Second, what are the aims of education of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? Third, what are significant similarities and differences between Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? In order to defend the research questions, a descriptive content analysis method will be used with a cross cultural approach. As for the limitations of this study, the principles of happiness are mainly discussed from the aspects of earthly life and of afterlife. The aims of education are limited to individual and social purposes. This paper is mainly focused on *The Analects* of Confucius, and on *The Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas. The significance of the study is to provide the basic theories and valuable resources of happiness education and religion education for educational theorists and practitioners in the world in terms of the mutual understanding of the Eastern and the Western cultures. The findings of this study are: Confucius' view on happiness principles is morally anthropological and pragmatic, whereas Aquinas' view is piously theological and metaphysical; and in the aspect of educational aims, Confucius has a morally human view, while Aquinas has a religiously theological view.

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I. Introduction

Happiness is an ultimate goal of all human beings, and education is one of significant factors or determinants to be able to feel or access happiness. For all times and spaces, education has been an essential tool not only to cultivate oneself and to obtain knowledge or wisdom, but to make human beings valuable between the spiritual and the physical worlds (Lee, 2016). In addition, learning as a type of education can develop one's mental and spiritual abilities. In particular, to learn the teaching and wisdom of sages or saints can be the best way to access an ultimate aim of human beings. As the author, Jeong-Kyu Lee, described in his article, "Educational Thoughts of Aristotle and Confucius" (2001), "the past spiritual and cultural legacy has continued up to now, and a flower, as modern culture, blooms through the spiritual and practical fruition of the great predecessors" (p. 162).

Therefore, to investigate the happiness principles and educational aims of the great sages of the two worlds is meaningful to reveal something to be desired. In this vein, this article has been organized as a comparison of Confucius (551-479 BCE), a China's most famous teacher, philosopher, political theorist, the founder of Confucianism, and a transmitter of the Chinese cultural legacy (Chen, 1993; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2019; Fung, 1996; Moritz, 1990), and Thomas Aquinas (1225/7-1274), an Italian theologian, philosopher, Catholic priest, a Doctor of the Universal Church, and the prince and master of all Scholastic doctors (Barron, 2008; Chesterton, 2016; Conway, 2015; The 1914 Catholic Encyclopedia, 2019). The purpose of this article is to examine the happiness principles and the educational aims of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas. To discuss this study logically, three research questions are addressed. First, what are the principles of happiness of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? Second, what are the aims of education of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? Third, what are significant similarities and differences between Confucius and Thomas Aquinas?

In order to defend the research questions, a descriptive content analysis method will be used with a cross cultural approach. The author of this article will use the original scripts, the Chinese *Lun Yu* (Analects) and the Latin *Summa Theologica*, and their English translations. As for the limitations of this study, the principles of happiness are mainly discussed from the aspects of this life and of next life. The

aims of education are limited to individual and social purposes. This paper is mainly focused on *The Lun Yu (The Analects)* of Confucius, and on *The Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas. Considering the two great sages, who have contributed to the spiritual and practical worlds of the East and the West, the author believes that this study can give a valuable meaning to the educators of both worlds. Several researchers (Goodnight, 2018; Klancer, 2015; Pang-White, 2006; Zhao, 2013) reviewed moral or ethical themes, comparing Confucius with Thomas Aquinas, but the author in this article intends to discuss the happiness principles and the educational aims of both great thinkers from a cross cultural approach. The significance of the study is to provide the basic theories and valuable resources of happiness education and religion education for educational theorists and practitioners in the world in terms of the mutual understanding of two cultures.

II. The Principles of Happiness

A. Happiness Principles in Confucius' Analects

Confucius (551-479 BC), Kung-fu-tzu (the Master Kung), or Kung-tzu, original name Kongqiu, literary name Zhongni, who lived at the end of the fifth century B.C. in China, and known in the West by the Jesuit translation of his name, was China's most famous teacher, philosopher, and one of the great moral teachers of all human history (Ames, 2019; Durant & Little, 2002). His ideas, as the foundations of Confucianism, have substantially influenced people's thought and life in East Asia, such as China, Korea, and Japan.

The author of this study is limited to the *Lun Yu* (in English "Analects"), as one of the central texts of Confucianism and one of the "Four Books", which are collections of Confucius' sayings by his students. In the *Lun Yu*, Confucius does not argue "happiness" as a specific subject or theme, but he highlights "*Jen*"(仁) (pronounced "*Ren*", perfect virtue, free from selfishness, benevolence, charity, humanity, love, or goodness) for the good of human beings through cultivating virtuous oneself, performing humane acts, and behaving with ritual propriety. Confucius in the *Lun Yu* teaches healthy humane moral and virtuous ethics how to be a Noble Person, a harmonious family, a peaceful society, and a righteous state.

Confucius finds happiness as a profoundly moral issue in the earthly life, and illustrates it with various examples in his text.

The Western concepts of happiness are different from the East Asian notions (Chinese/幸福, Korean/행복, Japanese/こうふく, 幸せ personal happiness). The East Asian notions of happiness combine the Chinese two words, *hsing* (幸) and *fu* (福): the former “*hsing*” means to rejoice, fortunate, prosperous, and distinguish, while the latter “*fu*” happiness, good fortune, blessing, bliss, and prosperity, following the Chinese cultural tradition (Chinese-English Dictionary: Mathews, 1993). The *hsing* is subjective and unilateral, whereas the *fu* is objective and reciprocal. The word “*hsing*” was written 4 times, but the word “*fu*” was not written in the *Lun Yu*. Among Confucian “The Four Books,” the *fu* (福) appeared once in the Mengzi’s Text (*The Works of Mencius*, Li Lou I, Ch. 4) and once in the *Zhong Yong* (The State of Equilibrium and Harmony, Ch. 25, in *The Classics of Rites*). However, the *fu* (福) was matched 15 times in *The Classics of Rites* (禮記 *Liji*). The Chinese word “*fu*” which frequently written in the propriety text was closely related to social collectivism and hierarchically reciprocal human relationship. For instance, the word “*fu*” has been commonly used between family members, between forefathers and posterity, and between the old and the young in special days, such as a New Year’s Day. Parents or grandparents say to their siblings, “Have a good blessing!”, while their descendants bow and say to their ascendants, “Please have a good blessing and enjoy a long life!”

In the Analects of Confucius, the Western concepts of happiness were not definitely mentioned, but several words and phrases, such as *le*, *yao*, or *yueh* (樂: 48 matched/ *yueh* (music), *le* (delight, pleasure), and *yao* (to take pleasure, enjoyment), *hao* (好: 53 matched/ to love, to be fond of, friendly, good, excellent), *shuo* or *yuech* (說: 21 matched/ *yuech* (pleasant, delight), *shuo* (to speak, opinion, theory), *xi* (喜: 5 matched/ joy, glad, pleasure), *hsing* (幸: 4 matched/ good fortune), *yi* (怡: 3 matched: Book 10, Chapter 4 & Book 13, Chapter 28/ mild, bland,

satisfied), *yaoyao* (夭夭: 1 matched: Book 7, Chapter 4/ pleased), *yiyi* (怡怡: 1 matched: Book 10, Chapter 4/ satisfied), and *yuyu* (愉愉: 1 matched: Book 10, Chapter 5/ highly pleased), containing the meanings related to happiness were frequently written (Mathews, 1993; Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects>, Wang, et al., 2019). Two of these words express several different meanings and pronunciations, including a term related to the meaning of happiness. For instance, the Chinese word “樂” involves different pronunciations and meanings, *yueh* (music), *le* (delightful, pleasure), and *yao* (to take pleasure, enjoyment), and the word “說” contains *yuech* (pleasant, delight), *shuo* (to say, to tell, opinion, theory), and *shui* (to influence, to persuade, to stop) (Mathews, 1993; Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects>).

Several major Chapters and Books of the Analects related to the meaning of happiness are cited as the following:

*The Master said, "Is it not **pleasant** [說] to learn with a constant perseverance and application? Is it not **delightful** [樂] to have friends coming from distant quarters? Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?" -Book 1, Chapter 1-*

*The Master said, "If a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with the rites of propriety? If a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with **music** [樂]?" -Book 3, Chapter 3-*

*The Master said, "It is by the Odes that the mind is aroused. It is by the Rules of Propriety that the character is established. It is from **Music** [樂] that the finish is received." -Book 8, Chapter 8-*

*The Master said, "Man is born for uprightness. If a man lose his uprightness, and yet live, his escape from death is the effect of mere **good fortune** [幸]." -Book 6, Chapter 19-*

*The Master said, "The wise find **pleasure** [樂] in water; the virtuous find **pleasure** [樂] in hills. The wise are active; the virtuous are tranquil. The wise are **joyful** [樂]; the virtuous are long-lived." -Book 6, Chapter 23-*

*The Master said, "Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hui! With a single bamboo dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink, and living in his mean narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his **joy** [樂] to be affected by it. Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hui!" -Book 6, Chapter 11-*

*The Master said, "With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow; I have still **joy** [樂] in the midst of these things. Riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness, are to me as a floating cloud." –Book 7, Chapter 16-*

*Confucius said, "There are three things men find **enjoyment** [樂] in which are advantageous, and three things they find **enjoyment** in which are injurious. To find **enjoyment** in the discriminating study of ceremonies and **music** [樂]; to find **enjoyment** in speaking of the goodness of others; to find **enjoyment** in having many worthy friends - these are advantageous. To find **enjoyment** in extravagant **pleasures** [樂]; to find **enjoyment** in idleness and sauntering; to find **enjoyment** [樂] in the **pleasures** [樂] of feasting these are injurious." –Book 16, Chapter 5-*

*The Master said, "You, have you heard the six words to which are attached six becloudings?" ... There is the **love** [好] of being benevolent without the **love** of learning - the beclouding here leads to a foolish simplicity. There is the **love** of knowing without the **love** of learning - the beclouding here leads to dissipation of mind. There is the **love** of being sincere without the **love** [好] of learning - the beclouding here leads to an injurious disregard of consequences. There is the **love** [好] of straight forwardness without the **love** of learning - the beclouding here leads to rudeness. There is the **love** of boldness without the **love** of learning - the beclouding here leads to insubordination. There is the **love** of firmness without the **love** [好] of learning - the beclouding here leads to extravagant conduct." –Book 17, Chapter 8- Cited from Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects> Retrieved Sep. 15, 2019.*

As Confucius mentions in Book 3, Chapter 3, happiness as a basically moral issue is rooted in the Confucian core virtue of “*ren*” (perfect virtue, love, goodness, charity, humanity, benevolence)(Buckingham, 2012). Confucius regards perfect virtue, as “not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself” (Book 12, Chapter 2), which is a Golden Rule as the Christian Bible’s “love your neighbor as yourself” (The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 22 Verse 39). In order to practice “perfect virtue,” Confucius advised his disciples to be entirely free regarding foregone conclusions, arbitrary predeterminations, obstinacy, and egoism (Book 9, Chapter 4). He found happiness in plain earthly life (Book 6, Chapter 11; Book 7, Chapter 16), with cultivating the virtues proper to humanity (Book 3, Chapter 3). Additionally, Confucius viewed music as one of essential factors to develop perfect virtue, with the rites of propriety (Book 3, Chapter 3; Book 8, Chapter 8). In the Lun Yu, music is closely associated with happiness and propriety, and happiness is

intimately related to learning and perfect virtue (Book 8, Chapter 8; *Book 16, Chapter 5*; *Book 17, Chapter 8*; *Book 1, Chapter 1*).

The Chinese character for music “(樂)” is the same as the character for happiness related words (enjoyment, pleasure), although the pronunciations are different: *yueh* (music), *le* (delightful, pleasure, happiness), and *yao* (to take pleasure, enjoyment, happiness). Furthermore, with the word “propriety,” the word “music” is frequently used as a combined word, “禮樂” (proprieties and music) in the Lun Yu (9 matched/ Book 11, Chapter 1; 11, 26; 13, 3; 14, 12; 16, 2; 16, 5). Confucius says, “When affairs cannot be carried on to success, proprieties and music will not flourish. When proprieties and music do not flourish, punishments will not be properly awarded (Book 13, Chapter 3).” In the Lun Yu, Confucius teaches how to find enjoyment or happiness: learning proprieties and music (禮樂); speaking of the goodness of others; and having many worthy [virtuously wise] friends (Book 16, Chapter 5). He also argues that the love of learning is an essential means to achieve humane virtue such as benevolence, wisdom, and sincerity (Book 17, Chapter 8).

In this vein, perfect virtue (*jen*) is able to be achieved through learning propriety and music (enjoyment), cultivating good humane virtue, and keeping the harmony or balance between myself and others, with love, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom as well as with a sort of happiness, goodness, blessing, enjoyment, and peace.

In sum, the principle of happiness in the Analects of Confucius is to achieve perfect virtue. In other words, Confucius finds happiness, as perfect virtue, “to subdue one's self and return to propriety” (Book 12, Chapter 1) in simple earthly life.

B. Happiness Principles in Aquinas' Summa Theologiae

Thomas Aquinas (1225/7-1274), Italian: *Tommaso d'Aquino*, lit. "Thomas of Aquino," was an Italian Dominican friar, Catholic priest, theologian, philosopher, the prince and master of all Scholastic doctors, and jurist in the tradition of scholasticism, within which he is also known as the *Doctor Angelicus* and the

Doctor Communis (Barron, 2008; Chesterton, 2016; Conway, 2015; The 1914 Catholic Encyclopedia, 2019; Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas, retrieved Sep. 26, 2019). He attempted to synthesize Aristotelian philosophy with the principles of Christianity (Copleston, 1962).

St. Aquinas argues that happiness is ultimate goodness or the highest end of virtuous life as Aristotle's argument in his *Nicomachen Ethics*. However, both philosophers have different views on when perfect happiness can be achieved. Aristotle asserts that happiness (Greek, *eudaimonia*) is being in the state of maximum well being, and that happiness can be achieved in this life through virtuous life, while Aquinas argues that perfect and true happiness (Latin, *beatitudo*) can be attained with the beatific vision of God in afterlife.

St. Thomas Aquinas, in *Summa Theologica or Summa Theologiae*, "one of the classics of the history of philosophy and one of the most influential works of Western literature" (Ross, 2003, p. 165), illustrates happiness from a Christian theological viewpoint. The researcher of this study intends to discuss "Aquinas' happiness," focusing on the First Part of the Second Part (I-II), General Principles of Morality, Questions 1-5: (Q1) Of Man's Last End (8 Articles), (Q2) Of Those Things in Which Man's Happiness Consists (8 Articles), (Q3) What Is Happiness (8 Articles), (Q4) Of Those Things That Are Required for Happiness (8 Articles), and (Q5) Of the Attainment of Happiness in *Summa Theologica*.

St. Thomas Aquinas begins the first head question (Q1), "Of Man's Last End," as follows:

In this matter we shall consider first the last end of human life; and secondly, those things by means of which man may advance towards this end, or stray from the path: for the end is the rule of whatever is ordained to the end. And since the last end of human life is stated to be happiness, we must consider (1): the last end in general; (2) happiness. -Benziger Bros. edition, 1947, Trans. By Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Retrieved Sep. 29, 2019 <https://dhspriority.org/thomas/summa/> -

Aquinas considers two themes under the Question 1: one is "*ultimus finis humanae vitae*" (the last end of human life), and the other is "*beatitudo*" (happiness). To discuss the Question 1, Aquinas presents eight points of inquiry, and each article

(A), including an inquiry, consists of objection 1, 2, 3, on the contrary, I answer that, and reply to objection 1, 2, 3 by turns. Under the Question 1 (Q1), there are eight points of inquiry: (1) Whether it belongs to man to act for an end? (2) Whether this is proper to the rational nature? (3) Whether a man's actions are specified by their end? (4) Whether there is any last end of human life? (5) Whether one man can have several last ends? (6) Whether man ordains all to the last end? (7) Whether all men have the same last end? and (8) Whether all other creatures concur with man in that last end?

In order to defend the questions, Aquinas first of all depicts “the object of the will is the end and the good in universal” in several articles under the Q1. Aquinas explains: “good (Latin, *bonum*) has the nature of an end” (Q1, A4); “in complete and perfect good, which is the ultimate end” (Q1, A6); and “good (*bonum*) is most complete which the man with well disposed affections desires for his last end” (Q1, 7). He regards ‘man’s last end’ as “the object of the will” (Q1, A8), “complete and perfect good” (Q1, A6), or “happiness” (Q1, A7; Q1, A8). Following to Augustine’s assertion (De Tri. Xiii 3, 4), Aquinas describes happiness as “all men agree in desiring the last end” (Q1, A7; Q1, A8). That is, “man’s last end is happiness (in Latin: *ultimus finis hominum est beatitudo*)” (Q1, A8), which means “the acquisition of the last end” (Q1, A8).

Aquinas briefly answers that:

If, however, we speak of man's last end, as of the acquisition of the end, then irrational creatures do not concur with man in this end. For man and other rational creatures attain to their last end by knowing and loving God: this is not possible to other creatures, which acquire their last end, in so far as they share in the Divine likeness, inasmuch as they are, or live, or even know.(S.T., I-II, Q1, A8)

He summarizes: since the last end of human life is addressed to be happiness, humans can attain happiness through knowing and loving God.

Secondly, Aquinas brings Question Two (Q2), Of Those Things in Which Man’s Happiness Consists (8 Articles), and discusses happiness: (1) in what it consists; (2) what it is; and (3) how we can obtain it. Concerning the first article, there are eight points of inquiry: Whether happiness consists in wealth, honor, fame or glory, power, any good of the body, pleasure, any good of the soul, and any created good?

(S.T., Q2) Aquinas argues eight factors in eight articles through his typical argument style. He points out that the eight factors do not bring happiness, and any created good does not constitute man's happiness. He argues that all these pursuits lead to temporary happiness or good feelings, and they do not bring eternal happiness.

Furthermore, Aquinas claims that happiness is man's true good (*verum hominis bonum*, Q2, A3), perfect good (*perfectum bonum*, Q2, A4), a perfection of man (*perfectio hominis*, Q2, A7), and a perfection of the soul (*perfectio animae*, Q2, A7). Since human beings' natural desire does not reach out a good surpassing, any created good does not constitute man's happiness (Q2, A8). According to the words of the Psalm 102:5: "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things. Therefore God alone constitutes man's happiness," Aquinas asserts that we can obtain happiness through God, as the universal good, who alone constitutes man's happiness, and that the last end of man is not the good of the universe, but God himself (Q2, A8).

Thirdly, Aquinas brings Question Three (Q3), What is Happiness (8 Articles), and discusses what happiness is and what things are required for it. In the Article 1, Question 3, he additionally describes what happiness is: God is happiness itself (*Deum esse ipsam beatitudinem*); happiness is the supreme good (*beatitudo est summum bonum*); happiness is the same as God (*beatitudo est idem quod Deus*); God is happiness by His Essence (*Deus est beatitudo per essentiam suam*); and happiness is said to be the last end (*beatitudo dicitur ultimus finis*).

Aquinas asserts that man's happiness is something made and imperfect, existing in him, but happiness as man's supreme perfection is not something uncreated (Q3, A2). He states man's happiness is twofold, one is perfect and the other imperfect: the former attains to the true notion of happiness, whereas the latter partakes of some particular likeness of happiness (Q3, A6). He answers that 'final and perfect happiness consists in the vision of the Divine Essence, because a human being is not perfectly happy, provided that something remains for him or her to desire and seek, and because the perfection of any power is determined by the nature of its object' (S.T., I-II, Q3, A8).

Fourthly, Aquinas brings Question 4, Of Those Things That Are Required for

happiness (8 Articles), and addresses two subjects: we have now to consider those things that are required for happiness; and concerning this there are eight points of inquiry. The eight questions are: (1) Whether delight is required for happiness?; (2) Which is of greater account in happiness, delight or vision?; (3) Whether comprehension is required?; (4) Whether rectitude of the will is required?; (5) Whether the body is necessary for man's happiness?; (6) Whether any perfection of the body is necessary?; (7) Whether any external goods are necessary?; and (8) Whether the fellowship of friends is necessary? (S.T., I-II, Q4)

Aquinas answers that “since man has the entire fullness of his perfection in God” (Q4, A8), he does not need the above things concerning eight points of inquiry. Aquinas argues that “*duplex est beatitudo, una imperfecta, quae habetur in hac vita; et alia perfecta, quae in Dei visione consistit*” (happiness is twofold: the one is imperfect and is had in this life; the other is perfect, consisting in the vision of God) (Q4, A5). Imperfect happiness (*felicitas*), which is dependent on a body, can be obtained in this life by growing in one’s knowledge of God through the operation of either speculative or practical intellect, while perfect happiness (*beatitudo*) or true happiness (*vera beatitudo*), which is not dependent on a body, consists in the vision of God, that is, seeing the Essence of God, wherein is true Happiness, cannot be obtained until the Day of Judgment, when one will receive one’s body back again (S.T., I-II, Q4, A5).

This assertion of Aquinas makes perfect happiness of being with God supreme in afterlife because it is not required for anything other than God. In brief, imperfect happiness can be obtained in this life by means of human natural principle, but perfect and true happiness can only be achieved in afterlife by the power of God (Lubak, 1948).

Fifthly, Aquinas brings Question 5, Of the Attainment of Happiness (8 Articles), and states eight points of inquiry: (1) Whether man can attain Happiness?; (2) Whether one man can be happier than another?; (3) Whether any man can be happy in this life?; (4) Whether Happiness once had can be lost?; (5) Whether man can attain Happiness by means of his natural powers?; (6) Whether man attains Happiness through the action of some higher creature?; (7) Whether any actions of man are necessary in order that man may obtain Happiness of God?; and (8)

Whether every man desires Happiness? (S.T., I-II, Q5)

Aquinas claims that the human being is capable of the Perfect Good through seeing God's Essence, and that happiness can be attained by the vision of the Divine Essence, because one can apprehend the perfect good and is capable of seeing God (Q5, A1). From a twofold Consideration (Q4, A5), a certain participation of happiness, that is, imperfect happiness can be achieved in this life through his natural powers (Q5, A3), whereas perfect and true happiness can be attained in afterlife through the vision of God's Essence (Q5, A5). In the Question 5, Aquinas clearly describes that man's beatitude or happiness is twofold as follows:

Imperfect happiness that can be had in this life, can be acquired by man by his natural powers, in the same way as virtue, ... But man's perfect Happiness, as stated above (Question [3], Article [8]), consists in the vision of the Divine Essence. Now the vision of God's Essence surpasses the nature not only of man, but also of every creature, ... For the natural knowledge of every creature is in keeping with the mode of his substance: thus it is said of the intelligence (De Causis; Prop. viii) that "it knows things that are above it, and things that are below it, according to the mode of its substance." But every knowledge that is according to the mode of created substance, falls short of the vision of the Divine Essence, which infinitely surpasses all created substance. Consequently neither man, nor any creature, can attain final Happiness by his natural powers. (S.T., I-II, Q5, A5)

Happiness can be considered in two ways. First according to the general notion of happiness: and thus, of necessity, every man desires happiness. For the general notion of happiness consists in the perfect good, ... But since good is the object of the will, the perfect good of a man is that which entirely satisfies his will. Consequently to desire happiness is nothing else than to desire that one's will be satisfied. And this everyone desires. Secondly we may speak of Happiness according to its specific notion, as to that in which it consists. And thus all do not know Happiness; because they know not in what thing the general notion of happiness is found. And consequently, in this respect, not all desire it. ... (S.T., I-II, Q5, A8) -Benziger Bros. edition, 1947, Trans. By Fathers of the English Dominican Province, <https://dhspriority.org/thomas/summa/> Retrieved Oct. 20, 2019 -

In brief, the principle of happiness in the Summa Theologica of Aquinas is summarized that man's happiness is twofold (*duplex hominis beatitudo*): Imperfect happiness (*felicitas*), which is dependent on a body, can be obtained in this life by growing in one's knowledge of God through the operation of one's natural intellect, while true and perfect happiness (*beatitudo*), which is not dependent on a body, consists in the vision of God. Now since true and perfect happiness surpasses every created nature, a human being is not able to obtain perfect happiness (*beatitudo*) by

his or her natural power. Through the vision of God's Essence alone, a human can attain perfect Happiness.

III. The Aims of Education

A. Educational Aims in Confucius' Analects

Confucius, as a China's greatest teacher, emphasizes learning not only to cultivate oneself but also to build a morally perfect gentleman, a harmonious society, and a righteous state. Confucius uses the word "learning (學 *hsueh*)" to denote education. The word "learning" is interrelated with education and virtue (Book 7, Chapter 3; Book 17, Chapter 8), and it matched 118 times in the Analects. Confucius also highlights the importance of learning in order to establish ethical and pedagogical principles (Book 1, Chapter 1; Book 2, Chapter 11; Book 2, Chapter 15; Book 19, Chapter 7).

Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application? (Book 1, Chapter 1)(cited from Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects>)

If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others.(Book 2, Chapter 11)

Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous. (Book 2, Chapter 15)

The learning virtue without proper cultivation; the not thoroughly discussing what is learned; not being able to move towards righteousness of which a knowledge is gained; and not being able to change what is not good - these are the things which occasion me solicitude.(Book 7, Chapter 3)

Mechanics have their shops to dwell in, in order to accomplish their works. The superior man learns, in order to reach to the utmost of his principles.(Book 19, Chapter 7) -cited from Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects> Retrieved Nov. 9, 2019.-

Like learning, knowledge(知 *zhi*) is also important factor to achieve moral cultivation. The general meaning of knowledge is "to know" or "to understand" through experience and education. In the Analects, the Chinese character, 知(*zhi*, knowledge), is shown 118 times and used interchangeably with wisdom or intelligence (智 *zhi*). In the Analects, knowledge is defined as "to say you know

when you know, and to say you do not know when you do not know” (Book 2, Chapter 17). Confucius says that benevolence or perfect virtue is to love all human beings, and knowledge is to know all human beings (Book 12, Chapter 22). The Confucian notion of knowledge is to know all human beings, and knowledge as a tool for attitudinal development can be attained through constant learning and practice (Lee, 2001). He argues that it is impossible to know humans, without knowing the force of the words (Book 20, Chapter 3). Through consistent learning with thought, one can cultivate oneself and become a virtuously superior master.

According to Confucius, the word *zhi* is always supported by virtue (Book 7, Chapter 3), and be complemented with the process of consistent learning (Book 1, Chapter 1; Book 19, Chapter 6). As an individual aim, the goodness for a man or woman is *jen* (benevolence, humanity, love, perfect virtue), which conceived as a core value of virtue (Lee, 2001, p. 170). He also defines *jen* (perfect virtue) as “to subdue one's self and return to propriety is perfect virtue”(Book 12, Chapter 1), and advocates this as a practical way for *jen*. In order to become a superior master (*chun-tzu*), Confucius highlights three kinds of virtue: wisdom, virtue (humanity), and boldness. He mentions that “the wise are free from perplexities; the virtuous from anxiety; and the bold from fear”(Book 9, Chapter 29).

Moreover, Mencius or Mengzi (372–289 BC or 385–303 or 302 BC), a Chinese Confucian thinker who has often been called as the Second Sage, additionally suggests four kinds of virtue as four principles: virtue (humanity), righteousness, propriety, and wisdom (Mengzi, Gong Sun Chou I, Ch. 6). Mencius argues that “men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs”(Gong Sun Chou I, Ch. 6). He explains that the four principles are part of human nature, which supports his theory that human nature is fundamentally good.

In the Analects, benevolence and righteousness are closely related to propriety and knowledge or wisdom. The former two virtues are part of human nature, while the latter two virtues are part of learning and practice. According to *Liji* (The Classic of Rites), the [Way] (of duty), virtue, benevolence (humanity), and righteousness cannot be fully carried out without the rules of propriety (Qu Li I, Ch. 8). As *jen* (benevolence) is a core value of individual aims, propriety as an essential principle of social aims is a central virtue to give comfort to all the people as well

as to cultivate oneself (Book 14, Chapter 42). The rule of propriety is also considered as a guiding virtue or principle to maintain a peaceful state (Book 14, Ch. 41). Especially, in order to establish perfect virtue and to sustain positive relationships among the people in the rigidly hierarchical system society, the propriety should be demanded as rules (Book 12, Ch. 1). Confucius also emphasizes propriety as the following:

Respectfulness, without the rules of propriety, becomes laborious bustle; carefulness, without the rules of propriety, becomes timidity; boldness, without the rules of propriety, becomes insubordination; straightforwardness, without the rules of propriety, becomes rudeness. When those who are in high stations perform well all their duties to their relations, the people are aroused to virtue. (Book 8, Ch. 2) (cited from Legge, 1861, <https://ctext.org/analects> Retrieved Nov. 12, 2019)

In this vein, the four virtues are closely related to each other and are essentially concerned with individual and social aims in Confucian education. The four core virtues are mainly based on individual principles, which largely related with social principles. With four virtues, Confucius also advocates “rectifying name (*cheng-ming*)” as an important virtue to build a superior person, a moral community, and a righteous state (Book 13, Ch. 3).

In sum, Confucius in his Analects argues that the above major virtues can be attained not merely through constant learning and practice but also through subduing one's self and return to propriety. Thus, the aims of Confucius' education are: (a) to attain the major virtues, which can ethically cultivate oneself as a superior master, and (b) to establish the peaceful family, the harmonious society, and the righteous state through virtuous self-cultivation.

B. Educational Aims in Aquinas' Summa Theogogica

Thomas Aquinas, as the prince and master of all Scholastic doctors, emphasizes teaching and learning in the 1st Article, 117th Question of the First Part in *Summa Theologiae*. Aquinas asks the question: Whether one man can teach another? He answers that “one man can teach another, and the teacher can be truly said to impart knowledge to the mind of the pupil by causing him actually to know that which

before he had only the capacity to know.” In *Specimen Pages from the Summa Theologica*, the text also describes that “learning takes place when one person teaches another. Knowledge in the pupil must result from the activity of his own mind”(p. 24). The Specimen pages describes three tips for teachers: Avoid Useless Questions -- Do not overload the mind of the beginner with a multitude of useless questions; Order -- Books for beginners should be written with due regard for scientific order; and Avoid Repetitions -- avoid repetitions which, if they be frequent and unnecessary, excite disgust and cause confusion (pp. 23-24). In the First Specimen, Aquinas suggests “principles on *teaching*” or “principles of pedagogy,” and insists three necessary things for teaching: *stability, clearness, and purity of intention*. In *Specimen Pages from the Summa Theologica*, Aquinas depicts the principle of pedagogy as follows:

Principles of Pedagogy -- *Yielding to an inclination which is entirely in accordance with the fitness of things, we shall select for the first specimen St. Thomas' principles on teaching. In his commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew, St. Thomas has sketched the character of an ideal Christian Doctor, of one who teaches the truths of religion. The perfect Doctor, he says, is one whose life as well as whose doctrine is light. Three things are necessary to him: stability, that he may never deviate from the truth; clearness, that he may teach without obscurity; and purity of intention, that he may seek God's glory and not his own (in cap. v. Matt). In the Prologue to the Summa and in several articles in the body of the work he lays down principles concerning teachers in general. The few words which he wrote by way of introduction to the Summa, giving his reasons for composing a manual of theology, are a mine of information concerning his principles on pedagogy, or the art of teaching the young (trans. D. J. Kennedy, 1915, p.23* <https://ia802704.us.archive.org/21/items/ITheSummaTheologicaOfStThomas/ITheSummaTheologicaOfStThomas.pdf> Retrieved Nov. 15, 2019).

In the First Part of the Second Part (I-II), *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas argues that knowledge is obtained when the active intellect abstracts a concept from an image received from the senses. Aquinas claims two different types of knowledge, sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge: sense knowledge begins in the senses, and is completed in the intellect (Bourke, 1960, p. 12). There is a dual operation to the intellect: one operation is the understanding of indivisibility; the other operation relates to combining and distinguishing (Bourke, 1960, p. 14). Knowledge of physical objects is better suited to human capabilities, but the highest knowledge humans can attain is knowledge of God. He asserts that there is the most perfect knowledge in God, who is in the highest degree of immateriality, and occupies the

highest place in knowledge (First Part, Q14, A.1). Aquinas describes the most perfect knowledge in God as the following:

In God there exists the most perfect knowledge. To prove this, we must note that intelligent beings are distinguished from non-intelligent beings in that the latter possess only their own form; whereas the intelligent being is naturally adapted to have also the form of some other thing; for the idea of the thing known is in the knower. Hence it is manifest that the nature of a non-intelligent being is more contracted and limited; whereas the nature of intelligent beings has a greater amplitude and extension ... it is clear that the immateriality of a thing is the reason why it is cognitive; and according to the mode of immateriality is the mode of knowledge.... therefore God is in the highest degree of immateriality ... it follows that He occupies the highest place in knowledge. (First Part Q14, A.1, ST) -Benziger Bros. edition, 1947, Trans. By Fathers of the English Dominican Province, <https://dhspriority.org/thomas/summa/> Retrieved Nov. 20, 2019 -

In the Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 9, A. 2, Aquinas explains the difference between wisdom and knowledge: “the knowledge of Divine things is called "wisdom," while the knowledge of human things is called "knowledge.” He describes knowledge and wisdom as follows:

If this certitude of the judgment is derived from the highest cause, the knowledge has a special name, which is wisdom: for a wise man in any branch of knowledge is one who knows the highest cause of that kind of knowledge, and is able to judge of all matters by that cause: and a wise man "absolutely," is one who knows the cause which is absolutely highest, namely God. (Second Part of the Second Part, Q. 9, A. 2)

In sum, Aquinas claims that it is reasonable to speak of one person teaching another in the sense that one can serve as the secondary cause of another’s knowledge, even though God is ultimately the source of human knowledge and of the capacity to acquire this knowledge (Williams, 2014, P. 51). His educational principles can be briefly summarized: on the basis of deep and pious Christian faith, commitment to clarity in reasoning, and openness to the force of the better argument (op. cit., p. 53). The aims of Aquinas’ education are not only to initiate the human life of reason into the Christian life of virtue, but to enable humans to attain this ultimate state of beatific perfection through pious and abiding Christian faith (op. cit.).

IV. Significant Similarities and Differences: Confucius vs. Thomas Aquinas

The author of this study firstly investigates significant similarities and differences in the aspect of happiness principles between Confucius and Aquinas. Next, he explores them in the aspect of educational principles between the two great teachers.

First of all, Confucius in *Lun Yu* claims that happiness principles are (1) to morally cultivate oneself through consistent learning, (2) to achieve humane virtue such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom (knowledge), (3) to keep the harmony or peace between myself and family, others, or communities, and (4) to subdue one's self and return to propriety. Confucius regards happiness as perfect virtue in simple earthly life. He examples several ways to find happiness or pleasure through learning propriety and music, speaking of the goodness of others, and having a number of worthy friends.

On the other hand, St. Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae* argues that the principles of two kinds of happiness are: (1) to obtain 'imperfect happiness' (*felicitas*) by means of one's natural principles, (2) to obtain imperfect happiness in this life by growing of God through the operation of one's natural intellect, (3) to be reached imperfect happiness in earthly life by living a life of virtue, (4) to consist in the vision of God (perfect happiness), (5) to attain 'perfect happiness' (*beatitudo*) through the vision of God's Essence alone, (6) to be reached perfect happiness in afterlife. Aquinas suggests two kinds of happiness, and asserts that imperfect happiness depends on a body in this life, while perfect happiness does not depend on a body but consists in God's vision in afterlife.

Similarly, Confucius and Aquinas basically believe that happiness is the highest Good, but both have significantly different views on: what is happiness; how to obtain happiness; and when complete happiness can be achieved. Both great thinkers agree that moral virtues are acquired through practice. Additionally, both believe that virtue leads to happiness, even though Aquinas advocates imperfect happiness.

For Confucius, happiness is to achieve perfect virtue, and happiness can be achieved through constant learning and practice important moral virtues in this life.

In contrast to Confucius, Aquinas differently claims two kinds of happiness, perfect happiness and imperfect happiness. He also asserts that imperfect happiness can be achieved through the operation of one's natural intellect in earthly life, and depends on a human body, whereas perfect happiness can be achieved through the vision of God's Essence in afterlife, and consists in the vision of God.

In brief, Confucius' view on happiness is morally anthropological and pragmatic, while Aquinas' view is piously theological and metaphysical. Additionally, Confucius' view is proportionate to human nature, whereas Aquinas' view belongs to Divine nature.

Next, in the aspect of educational philosophy, Confucius in his *Analects* suggests educational principles: (1) four virtues, such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom (knowledge), are mainly based on individual and social principles; (2) the major virtues can be attained through constant learning and practice; (3) perfect virtue can be attained through subduing one's self and return to propriety; and (4) rectifying name is an important virtue to establish a superior master, a peaceful community, and a righteous state. Confucius considers learning as an essential factor or means to connect between education and virtue as well as to build ethical and pedagogical principles. In addition, he believes that knowledge or wisdom, as an important virtue to achieve moral cultivation, is to know all human beings through experience and education. In the *Analects*, knowledge is used interchangeably with wisdom. Confucius claims that the aims of education are: (a) to attain the major virtues, which can ethically cultivate oneself as a superior master, and (b) to establish a peaceful family, a harmonious society, and a righteous state through virtuous self-cultivation.

On the other hand, St. Thomas Aquinas in *Specimen Pages from the Summa Theologica* describes "principles on *teaching*" or "principles of pedagogy": (1) learning takes place when one person teaches another; (2) three necessary things for teaching are stability, clearness, and purity of intention; (3) three hints for teachers are avoid useless questions, order, and avoid repetitions; and (4) knowledge in the pupil should result from the activity of one's own mind. Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica* illustrates the difference between wisdom and knowledge:

the former is Divine things, while the latter is human things. Aquinas argues a human being can serve as the secondary cause of another's knowledge, although God is ultimately the source of human knowledge and of the capacity to acquire this knowledge. Aquinas' educational principles are briefly summarized: (1) on the basis of deep and pious Christian faith, commitment to clarity in reasoning, and (2) openness to the force of the better argument (Williams, 1914, p. 53). The aims of Aquinas' education are: (1) to initiate the human life of reason into the Christian life of virtue, and (2) to enable humans to attain this ultimate state of beatific perfection through pious and abiding Christian faith (op. cit.).

Similarly, Confucius and Aquinas argue that learning is an essential means to be able to access knowledge and to approach perfect virtue. However, both have significantly different views on: the nature of knowledge, educational principles, and pedagogical aims. Confucius and Aquinas believe that knowledge acquired through learning and practice leads to the life of virtue, although Aquinas claims God is ultimately the source of human knowledge and of the capacity to acquire this knowledge (Williams, 2014, P. 51). For Confucius, educational principles depend on the basis of human learning and knowledge, while Aquinas' view depends on deep and pious Christian faith as well as on the most perfect knowledge in God. Confucius' educational aims are not merely to achieve a moral superior person but also to build a harmonious family, a peaceful society, and a righteous state, whereas Aquinas' pedagogical aims are to enable humans to attain this ultimate state of beatific perfection through pious and abiding Christian faith as well as to initiate the human life of reason into the Christian life of virtue.

In sum, in the aspect of educational principles and aims, Confucius has a morally human view, while Aquinas has a religiously theological view.

V. Summary and Conclusion

This study investigates the happiness principles and the educational aims of two great thinkers, Confucius and Aquinas. To discuss the study logically, three research questions are addressed. First, what are the principles of happiness of Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? Second, what are the aims of education of Confucius and

Thomas Aquinas? Third, what are significant similarities and differences between Confucius and Thomas Aquinas? In order to defend the research questions, a descriptive content analysis method is used with a cross cultural approach. This paper is mainly focused on *The Analects* of Confucius, and on *The Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas. The significance of the study is to provide the basic theories and valuable resources of happiness education and religion education for educational theorists and practitioners in the world in terms of the mutual understanding of the Eastern and the Western cultures.

The research findings of this study are as the following:

First, the principle of happiness in the Analects of Confucius is to achieve perfect virtue. Confucius finds happiness, as perfect virtue, “to subdue one's self and return to propriety” (Book 12, Chapter 1) in simple earthly life. On the other hand, the principle of happiness in the Summa Theologica of Aquinas is briefly described that man's happiness is twofold (*duplex hominis beatitudo*): Imperfect happiness (*felicitas*), which is dependent on a body, can be obtained in this life by growing in one's knowledge of God through the operation of one's natural intellect, whereas true and perfect happiness (*beatitudo*), which is not dependent on a body, consists in the vision of God.

Second, the aims of Confucius' education are: (a) to attain the major virtues, which can ethically cultivate oneself as a superior master, and (b) to establish the peaceful family, the harmonious society, and the righteous state through virtuous self-cultivation. On the other hand, the aims of Aquinas' education are (a) to initiate the human life of reason into the Christian life of virtue, and (b) to enable humans to attain this ultimate state of beatific perfection through pious and abiding Christian faith (Williams, 1914, p. 53).

Third, Confucius and Aquinas both similarly believe that happiness is the highest Good, but they have significantly different views on: what is happiness; how to obtain happiness; and when complete happiness can be achieved. Both great thinkers agree that moral virtues are acquired through practice. In addition, both advocate that virtue leads to happiness, even though Aquinas asserts imperfect happiness. Confucius' view on happiness is morally anthropological and pragmatic,

whereas Aquinas' view is piously theological and metaphysical. Additionally, Confucius' view is proportionate to human nature, while Aquinas' view belongs to Divine nature.

In the aspect of educational principles and aims, Confucius and Aquinas both similarly argue that learning is an essential means to be able to access knowledge and to approach perfect virtue. However, they have significantly different views on: the nature of knowledge, educational principles, and pedagogical aims. Confucius and Aquinas advocate that knowledge acquired through learning and practice leads to the life of virtue, although Aquinas highlights God is ultimately the source of human knowledge and of the capacity to acquire this knowledge (Williams, 2014, P. 51). Confucius has a morally human view, while Aquinas has a religiously theological view.

In conclusion, based on the results of this study, the author suggests that the educational administrators and the educational policy makers of colleges and universities may design or plan to impart theory and wisdom in contemporary education and community in order to establish healthy morals of individuals as well as to harmonize the diverse societies and cultures. It is recommended that future research be undertaken to investigate the merits of educational theory and ethical thought in the West and the East. Finally, the author suggests that a scientific and mammonish trend of our contemporaries be worsened the life of human beings unless we build a peacefully righteous society and nation as well as a morally strong individual and community enhancing happiness or a good life.

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Mind

By Jeong-Kyu Lee,
educational scholar & poet

On the book of your mind
As you told
As you thought
As you acted those recorded

On the garden of your mind
Its seeds have deeply rooted
On your face
In your heart
In your soul

Now I know that

When a guest of death

Suddenly calls on you

Your thought

All things in the world

And all karmic ties

Without having any regrets

Finish clearly and fragrantly

Having your rebirth wishes

And a new life in the other world fulfilled

Please guide your hollowing mind

To the path of eternal life

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***Author:**

Jeong-Kyu Lee (1950 - present), educational scholar, is The 2017-19 Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award Winner, Marquis Who's Who in the World 24th-37th Edition (2007-2020), a listed educator with a degree of Philosophy of Doctor (Higher Educational Administration at The University of Texas at Austin), former President of Central College, Canada, Guest Scholar of the University of British Columbia, Canada, Research Fellow of Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) under the Korean Government, Joint Professor of Hongik University in Seoul, former Columnist at University News Network in South Korea, and reviewer of several international journals, such as The Cambridge Journal of Education, Higher Education, Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Radical Pedagogy, etc. Dr. Jeong-Kyu Lee's

academic articles and books have been published in domestic and several foreign countries, and international organizations such as South Korea, Canada, the U.S.(ERIC), the U.K., France, Mexico, Spain, India, China, OECD, UNESCO (IAU/HEDBIB), and the UN (UNPAN). A number of academic articles and books were written in English and Korean, and several articles were translated into French, Spanish, and Chinese. There are three poetical works: *The Songs of Nature and Spirituality*, *The Songs of Mountain Villages*, and *The Songs of Life*.