

# Natural Law and Daoist Law in the Perspective of Law and Morality

WANG Tongjun

Beijing International Studies University, Beijing, China

This paper has a comparative analysis of natural law and Daoist law, focusing on the connections of law and morality. There is a description of the definitions of them and the historical analysis of natural law. And the stoicism is introduced to reveal the feature and nature of links of law and morality, which is supported with the current cases of violences worldwide to demonstrate the significance of moral rules, the states of mind. The Daoist law in China emphasizes the spontaneity of the inner world, a higher spiritual condition to be pursued in ancient China, free from the inappropriate desires, less intervention of the authority with more initiative of the general public. The western individualistic god-centered law under the guidance of reason and rationality can go well along with the collectivistic China's Daoist law, the former stressed on the principles of justice, equality, fairness, etc. and the latter themed *Ziran*, self so, keeping as they are. The fighting guys of natural law and positive law in the West are mirrored with the counterparts of *Daofa*, the spontaneity of all things, and *Lifa*, the rule-based Confucian governance in China. The two couples as well as the two differing views within can either oppose or complement each other. Natural law can refer to the just doctrines, the moral principles, immanent in nature, while Daoist foundation is based on nature-like inclination, the self-so and other-so spontaneity.

**Keywords:** Natural law, Daoist law, morality, reason, *ziran*

## Introduction

Are there some connections between the natural law and the daoist law? What is the function of natural rights in the western culture? Do law and morality render some similarity or substantially differ from each other?

The place and function of morals in the law have always been a focal concern of legal and political philosophers, and it is no exaggeration to say that it has become one of the most significant questions, indeed the fundamental question, that animates the debates of today's jurisprudence (Wacks, 2012, p. 10). Positively, morals are of law in and of itself, law being the bottom line of the morals and ethics, nature and god being good brothers in law-governed communities in the West. Equality and justice are constituents in the rule of law.

The morality to law can be interpreted historically. There are laws and rules in the nature, animals, or plants with their own ethics, natural law just being one of the views. As we know, it was the Stoics who were especially attracted to the notion of natural law where "natural" meant in accordance with *reason*. The Stoic view informed the approach adopted by the Romans (as expressed by Cicero) who recognized (at least in theory) that laws which did not conform with "reason" might be regarded as invalid (Wacks, 2012, p. 16). The

requirement of reason, actually that of gods, for the stoics is similar to that of *Dao* in the daoists. Hence, there can be a couple of talks about God, reason, and *Dao*.

### Natural Law

The best description of “natural law”, according to one natural lawyer, “is that it provides a name for the point of intersection between law and morals.” There is an unquestionable tension between that “is” and what “ought” to be; theories of natural law attempt to resolve this. Its principal claim, put simply, is that what naturally is, *ought* to be. (Wacks, 2012, p. 11)

“Ought to be” is devised an obligation to a given situation, naturally a constitution of norms or forms. The “ises” and “oughtes” are the focus of the debate in terms of law and morality. Natural Law is a philosophical theory. It involves the idea that rights, values, and responsibilities are inherent in human nature. It doesn’t require political order or legislature and serves as a basis for morality and justice throughout human history. Natural Law contrasts with both Positive Law and Human Rights. Such natural ideas are of the greatest legal cultures in the western countries. The western legal history, to some extent, is a history of natural laws (Zhou etc., 2018, p. 20). Such a law is quite different from the man-made law, as the former centered on nature, God, and reason, reflecting the natural order and human conscience. It stresses the agreement between humanity and nature, morality of human beings in harmony with the law of nature, revealing the good, beautiful, justice, fairness. Nevertheless, the positive law is from the sovereignty, which can be unjust and evil.

#### The History of Natural Law

The theory of Natural Law is originated in the pre-Socrate era, then elaborating by philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and St. Thomas Aquinas. Plato did not have a theory on Natural Law; however, some of his theories involved concepts of Natural Law, while Aristotle arrested his attention to the distinction between law and nature, inviting the introduction of natural justice, attributed to the Stoics.

Many consider Aristotle to be the father of Natural Law Theory, arguing that what is “just by nature” is not always the same as what is “just by law”, the sovereignty. Furthermore, Cicero explained it as something contributing to the general good of society. Many contributions, then, enhanced the theory during the Renaissance and Enlightenment, more modern theories coming with other philosophical theories, like the Social Contract Theory. In more modern times, it was also supported by great thinkers such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., where the former talking about the danger of being destroyed by seven “sins”, the latter arguing that human beings should obey such laws over unjust or conflicting positive laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.” (retrieved from [corporatefinanceinstitute.com>esg>nat...](http://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/esg/nat...))

The ancient Greek thinkers, in the history of Western legal thought, were the first to create such a name of “natural law”. To them and for them, everything has rules or orders in the natural world, which holds true in the relationships between communities and individuals, established in their previous order. This order is either called “natural law” or rationality, to be discovered by people with wisdom (Guo, 2007, p. 39). The rules in the nature are somewhat orders, all the things are interconnected with some certain laws logically, which renders some rationality. This is the natural laws, universal rules, or principles in the universe, open and fair to all. All are required to follow the natural order, a harmonious world around us.

The Romans were poor in philosophy, in many ways, simply repeating the ideas of the Greeks. Cicero, a follower of the Stoic, remarked that natural law is eternal and universal, applicable to all countries and all times.

Romans were outstanding practitioners. The Greeks created a philosophy, while the Romans turned it into action. An equal citizenship right applies to almost all subjects of the so-called world empire, a law shared by all (Guo, 2007, p. 39). Cicero, a great Roman thinker and politician, harbored the superiority of the natural law, with justice and fairness in mind, turning the legal theory of natural law into the Roman community. His highlighting of the Greek philosophy promotes the Romans philosophical practices.

Europe, beginning with the 16th century, underwent a tremendous transformation from gods to humans. With the Renaissance, Reformation, and commodity economy, those liberated from theological constraints came to reveal nature and society from a “human” perspective. The natural law of theology, a way of expressing reality, was witnessing a shift from a conservative theological concept to a revolutionary political formula. Enlightenment thinkers, involved in the struggle of the bourgeoisie to overthrow feudal rule, paid great heed to natural law and natural rights, which is known as the classical natural law theory, distinguished from the previous and modern schools. Rationalism, individualism, radicalism, decentralization, and social contract theory were playing the leading roles (Guo, 2007, p. 39). The classic natural laws with the natural rights are changing with the times, pushed by the movements, pushing the society, gods-like law to human rules, conservatively to revolutionarily.

Such a theory was criticized and condemned by legal positivism in the mid-19th century. The latter argued that the former was hypocritical and untrue. The confrontation between the two schools caused the natural law thought declined for nearly a century, reviving in the 20th century with an academic trend after World War II, where the two world wars were fiercely impacting people’s minds resulting in many problems and contradictions in the capitalist long-term development. For those who are dissatisfied with the existing political and legal system or demand changes, the natural theory, the new one, has become one of the best weapons, as the bourgeoisie also felt that being confined to the existing laws, experiences, and theories was insufficient to achieve their goals. The emerging ideas still adhere to rationality and justice, varying to the empirical elements of law, with the leaders of Dworkin and Fuller (Guo, 2007, pp. 39-40). The opponent’s debate or even fighting leads to the upgrading of the natural rights, a host of events calling for the rebirth of the nature admirers.

### **What Is the Feature and Nature of Natural Law?**

Natural law scholars advocate fairness, rationality, and human rights, which is superior to human law as the former emphasizes fairness, the latter not. Hence, man-made law is less effective, struggling for fairness as much as possible. Fairness is the ultimate end for the people, the soul and base of the rule of law. This school claims that humans are essentially rational animals, with reason, they are obeying nature. Obeying such a law is to the human rationality, and through reason, there is a closer link between humans and nature, human rights involved here. Cicero, from the perspective of natural law, held that evil regulations could not be implemented, as such similar to the rules of robbery within the community. The state, whose fundamental task is to safeguard and develop human rights, possesses a portion of rights transferred by the people. Thus, evil laws are unacceptable. In another term, natural laws are of political rights, of which fairness is the heart, fair to all under law (Guo, 2007, pp. 40-41).

There are, logically, some loopholes in the natural theory. For instance, how do people know about it? What is the content concerned? Why is it effective? Why is the positive law conflicting with it not considered acceptable? How can natural rights be proven existing? Legal positivists challenge it on these issues in order to undermine its philosophical foundation and influence, while the natural scholars base deductive answers on

some prior self-evident “truths”. Nevertheless, it, with the emptiness of the premise, is doomed to the falsehood of the conclusion. The weakness of natural law is underlying its treating values as facts, replacing subjectivity with objectivity, confusing subjective values with objective laws, partly causing its declining in the mid to late 19th century. The historical fact is when such points flourished, the human world was full of hope, with its dying of humans immersed in a world of material desires, hostile and fighting against each other for pure interests (Guo, 2007, p. 41). Natural law is the integration of natural philosophy and moral thinkings, the combination of objective laws and subjective ideals. With such ideas, human value judgments have found an unquestionable authority materially, external natural laws having pursued their most authentic life in the human souls. The natural jurisprudence incorporates the subjective and the objective, an ideal design of physical and mental components.

Comparing to the classic, the new natural law scholars attach great importance to the rights of individuals and society, advocating that the two should be combined under a rational and just system to timely change the content of legal norms (Guo, 2007, p. 41). The 17th and 18th centuries witnessed the establishment of the natural law with long-lasting universal rules, while the new one came into being, broadly from the end of 19th century and the early of 20th century, narrowly since the World War II, preferring rationality with justice handshaking. The individual freedom can be closely connected with the social justice. How can we be a human being beneficial to the community? The binding morality requires the force of law externally.

### **The Stoic and Natural Law**

Stoicism clearly expresses an individualistic concept, with individuals’ self-sufficiency and happiness lying entirely in inner peace and harmony with nature, without the necessity of false external pursuits. Such expression of ethical individualism is centered on being independent, perfect, and feasible. Though it is not yet the modern individualism, it has laid a foundation for modern individualism. Individualism can be found in its shadow in the stoicism, such self-control and self-cultivation share something with the Daoism.

#### **What Is Stoicism?**

The tremendous influence Stoicism has exerted on ethical thought from early Christianity through Immanuel Kant and into the twentieth century is rarely understood and even more rarely appreciated. Throughout history, Stoic ethical doctrines have both provoked harsh criticisms and inspired enthusiastic defenders.

Our human reason gives us an affinity with the cosmic reason, Nature, that guides the universe. The fully matured adult thus comes to identifying his real self, his true good, with his completely developed, perfected rational soul. This best possible state of the rational soul is exactly what virtue is.

Humans, unlike all other animals, are constituted by nature to develop reason as adults, which transforms their understanding of themselves and their own true good.

The pure reason is an ideal vision with self-constraint and self-control, an intelligent wisdom, where those losing tempers are of alienation, passionate to impulses.

#### **Stoic Composure and Case Studies**

The Stoic believes that it is important to maintain composure in any situation, such being the “Stoic composure”. Because its opposite—passion—is a spiritual impulse deviating from reason and goes against nature. There is the scenario: if our feelings and emotions are too unrestrained, why is it against nature? If we carefully examine the Stoic nature view, we can find the answer. The Stoics defined the goal in life as living in

agreement with nature. “Nature” is a complex and multivalent concept for the Stoics, rich definitions for them. The first sense of the definition is living in accordance with nature as a whole, i.e. the entire cosmos. Each type of thing within the universe has its own specific constitution and character. This second sense of “nature” is what we use when we say it is the nature of fire to move upward. The third means living in agreement with our special, innate endowment—the ability to reason (retrieved from iep.utm.edu/stoiceth/).

Numerous cases about violence are reported worldwide, east or west. Different regions with different conflicts arise with plenty of reports on anger, fear, revenge, and even cultural conflicts or religious wars. To an individual, the behaviors are on account of frustrating, anger, or others; for a group or community, a race or a nation, regional fighting seems commonsense.

For each of the last four years there have been more than 600 mass shootings—almost two a day on average. The deadliest such attack, in Las Vegas in 2017, killed more than 50 people and left 500 wounded. The vast majority of mass shootings, however, leave fewer than 10 people dead. That’s nearly an 8% increase from 2020, which was a record-breaking year for firearm deaths. While mass shootings and gun murders (homicides) generally garner much media attention, more than half of the total in 2021 were suicides. Data show more than 50 people are killed each day by a firearm in the US. That’s a significantly larger proportion of homicides than is the case in Canada, Australia, England, and Wales, and many other countries (How many US mass shootings have there been in 2024? 5 September 2024, retrieved from bbc.com/news/world-u...).

Although Europe has made significant strides in advancing gender equality over the past century, led by countries like Finland and Sweden, gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive source of inequality across the continent. Between 2012 and 2022, there were over 14,000 intentional homicides of women in the European Union (EU) alone. Notably, over 30 percent of women report having experienced some form of violence since the age of 15, and nearly 50 percent of the public agrees that violence against women is fairly common inside the EU (retrieved from statista.com/topics/128...).

The number of reported crimes in Japan rose for the second successive year in 2023, approaching the level in 2019. The number of reported crimes in Japan had fallen for two decades following a peak in 2002 with 2.85 million. Since 2022 though, it has been on the rise again. The number in 2023 did show a slight drop of 6.0% compared with 2019. However, the number of “street crimes” (including street robberies, purse snatchings, bicycle thefts, physical assaults, and extortion) was 21.0% higher than the previous year. (retrieved from nippon.com/japan-d...).

Eight people were killed and 17 others injured in a knife attack at a vocational school in Yixing City, east China’s Jiangsu Province, on November 17, 2024. The 21-year-old suspect of Xu, a graduate of the school this year, returned to the school to vent his anger for not receiving his graduation certificate due to failing exams and for dissatisfaction with his internship pay (Update: 8 killed, 17 injured in knife attack at east China vocational school. Source: Xinhua, Editor: Huaxia, 2024-11-17 00:29:15). This was the second incident of fatal violence in China in a matter of days. Earlier this week, a 62-year-old man killed 35 people and wounded more than 40 more when he rammed his small SUV into a crowd in the southern city of Zhuhai. Violent knife crime is not uncommon in China, where firearms are strictly controlled, but attacks with such a high death toll are relatively rare. In recent months, there has been a spate of other attacks. In October in Shanghai, a man killed three people and wounded 15 others in a knife attack at a supermarket (China school knife attack kills at least 8, wounds 17, days after fatal car attack killed dozens, November 16, 2024/1:10 PM EST/CBS/AFP).

That organised violence in the Middle East has achieved record levels in recent years, which is as much a testament to the ability of these powerful arrangements to reproduce and amplify themselves as it is to the specifically violent functions the Middle East serves in the ongoing global contest to forge the future of modernity (retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13698249.2019.1664847#d1e440>).

There are now estimated 40 million forcibly displaced Africans (internally displaced persons, refugees, and asylum seekers), more than double the figure in 2016. Of the 15 African countries generating the largest number of forcibly displaced people, 14 are experiencing conflict. Twelve of these 15 countries are also authoritarian leaning, underscoring that exclusive government is both a direct (via repression) and indirect (via conflict) driver of forced displacement. Recognizing and addressing these primary drivers, therefore, is critical to alleviating the observable symptoms of record numbers of forcibly displaced people (retrieved from [africacenter.org/spotlig...](http://africacenter.org/spotlig...)).

Such cases, here and there, east or west, in the advanced countries or less advanced countries, to the common people, reveal the individuals' non-composure, lack of self-control. Variety of social problems involves considerably in personal irritation, out of temper, improper state of mind. Fairness and equality are not in the proper place. Irrational conducts are playing the dominate role.

### **The Modern Significance of the Natural Law in China and Daoist Law**

On one view the law can be spoken of as conferring rights and imposing obligations only insofar as we regard it as morality binding: a law that is not morally binding cannot impose any obligation on us. Since lawyers talk about the law in the language of rights and duties (rather than, say, the language of force and coercion) they are committed to a view of the law as morally binding (Simmonds, 2008, p. 168). Law is a moral-binding monster, an enabling and duties-imposed unity. This mainly owes to the natural law.

#### **The Influence of Natural Law on Modern China**

The death of Socrates best illustrates the Western reverence for the law, as Socrates died to defend the order and laws of the Athenian city-state. The serious challenge facing contemporary China is how to build people's faith in the law in today's society where there is a widespread lack of legal belief. The reason why the law loses credibility is because people believe that in this utilitarian and impetuous society, the law has become a legitimate basis for the selfish behavior of vested interests. The ultimate concept of natural law is the pursuit of a happy life, constantly practicing equality and justice, safeguarding human freedom, rights, and material wealth. Natural law is a way of thinking that embodies concepts such as equality, justice, freedom, and rights. Who is the law for? They are the tools of the authority in gaining fortune, where lack of justice in process leads to the failure of substantive justice, to say nothing of equality and fairness.

Natural law is essentially a moral law based on rationality, representing more of an ethical and moral view, a view of justice. As the spirit and principle guiding the establishment of positive law, natural law guides positive law towards the track of justice and fairness, becoming the basis for the rights protection of vulnerable groups. As is well known, the formulation of every law has its guiding ideology. The basic principles of China's Criminal Law are of equal application, of legality, and proportionality of crimes and punishments. Ignorance of the first, it can at least effectively limit the discretion of judges, a powerful weapon for the vulnerable to protect their own rights and interests (Wang, 2012, p. 80). The natural law and the positive law are mirror images of each other with respect to their virtues and vices. How can the law in China really do good

for the vulnerable without becoming the instrument of the authority? The impact of feudal system in the old China for thousands of years is strangling the process of rule of law.

### **The Good in the Natural Law**

One might say that the attempt to formulate explicitly the principles of the natural law is the attempt to explain what makes intelligible the actions that human agents have a tendency to perform. When Aquinas writes that the first principle of practical reason is that good is to be pursued – note that his insistence on a tight analogy between that first principle and the first principle of all reasoning, the principle of noncontradiction – what his is offering is the supreme principle of intelligibility for actions: that human actions are intelligible only insofar as they are for the sake of some good, only insofar as they are performed sub *ratione boni* (Murphy, 2007, p. 11). This means what principles of natural law are applicable in the pursuit of the good in justifying the human actions. Are such conducts intelligible? The objects aimed at should be affirmed as good to make the acts intelligible. Natural law is rooted in human nature. Life is a good and knowledge is a good.

Aristotle's argument has three parts. In the first part, he connects the concept of a thing's function to the concept of a thing's good. In the second, he shows that the human being must have a function. In the third, he argues that the function of the human is rational activity (Murphy, 2007, p. 22). Can we say rationality mean goodness? One of human's functions is good, a speculative one though. And human's flourishing is based on goodness, the virtue to be pursued push the progress of the community.

### ***De*, Virtuosity in *Daodejing*, in the Daoist Classic Code**

*De*, of virtue, the manifestation of *Dao*, is similar to goodness in natural law in the West. In the *Tian* (heaven-like) dominant Chinese culture, human's action reveals the inner world, where everyone is responsible for their own conduct, evil behaviors leading to punishment from *Tian*. In Daoism, free from improper desires is the objective for humans and things. *De* in all things demonstrates spontaneous nature, nurtured in their growing and development, sure.

### **The Daoist Spontaneity Is of Vagueness, Following the Laws of Nature**

Daoism highlights *ziran*, with its focus of itself-so. This term is composed of two words, *zi* and *ran*, the former being itself, the latter just so and so. *Ye Xiushan*, an eminent Chinese philosopher majoring western philosophy, aesthetics, and Chinese philosophy, remarks that with *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*'s thoughts, *ziran* is identical to freedom, and the opposite is true. These two terms render, in reality, the same implication. *Dao*, *Wu* (nothingness), *Pu* (simplicity), *Zhuo* (clumsiness), *Jing* (tranquility), *Xu* (emptiness), and so forth are all of *ziran*, keeping as it is, self-so, free from everything. The daoist term of *ziran* entails the concept of liberty and freedom, while traditionally the West mainly concentrates on the free thoughts (Chen, 2018, pp. 144-147).

According to *Mou Zongsan*, one of the most creative and innovative Chinese philosophers in the 20th century, the daoist theory is of intelligence of *Wu* (nothingness). Such curve-styled growing and development can be divided into four levels of negative processes, that is "nothing" of life, physiological desire, emotions and feelings, as well as the notion mechanism. In terms of *Zhuangzi*'s thoughts can be interpreted semantically as a state of vision or mind, of which the perceptions of *Dao*, *Wu*, Oneness, and *ziran* all are revealed subjectively based on the objective things through fables. *Xiaoyaochenghua* (逍遥乘化), carefree and adaption to nature, and *ziyouzizai* (自由自在), free to go for nothing, are of *Wu*, *ziran*, coming to oneness. Self-satisfaction for nothing is kind of *Xiaoyao*, carefree; waiting for something to nothing, other-so to self-so, such is of *Dao*, *Wu*, and Oneness. *Ziran* is subject to the subjective state of mind instead of the specific thing, the latter being of

other-so (Yi, 2020, p. 107). The Daoism emphasized careless in the secular world. *Laozi* thought that water is the specific image of *ziran*, its propensity reflected only through water. Dews, streams, rivers, seas, and others are keeping as they are. For the human beings, they should go like water, simple and authentic, clarifying their souls identified with the great dao, which is the humane natural beauty (Wei, 2014, p. 127).

The *Dao* keeps as it is, following nature, with *Wu Wei*'s governance of non-coercive action. This is of the theory of *Hun Dun*'s perception, a somewhat chaotic theory, the heart of the Daoism, all being oneness. The *Dao* that can be daoted is not the long-lasting *dao*, the name named not the universal (general) term. Such a recognition is also of *Hun Dun*, vague conception, coming to oneness, of nothing. *Xiang* (Elephants-like monster), *Hu* (忽, of suddenness), *Xu* (虛, emptiness), *Jing* (stillness), *Weimiaoquantong* (subtle and profound) are all chaos-like, all things are integrity of multiple parts. Staying of composure in the chaotic circumstances is a kind of state of mind, challenging and demanding forever. The opposites are entangling and transforming into each other, like two persons fighting, now one suppressing the other, then the opposite prevailing. Everything is changing, fortune and misfortune mingled with each other (Wang, 2024, pp. 371-388).

*Liu Bai*, a skill of leaving blank space in Chinese calligraphy, means recognizing the meaning of "nothingness" or "emptiness". *Wu*, "Nothing", is such a guy, implying to leave, *You*, "something" hidden, to better showcase itself; *Wuwei* implies blank space left, leaving the people or all things to possess greater autonomy. The Chinese story goes that two fish, dying with the drying pool, were struggling (weeping) with their small droplets of saliva wetting each other to survive. Such actions are not better than that of bosoms meeting each other in the daily life like the strangers, free from any previous friendship, to be free men. This saying is similar to *Liu Bai*, a philosophical calligraphical recognition.

There is a god-like *WU* (nothing) out of myriads of things. Its Chinese name of *Dao*, with a certain evolution, generates all things universally, "She gives birth to one, one to two, two to three, and three to all" (Wang, 2024, p. 446). The integrated *Dao*, in modern term, is interdisciplinary. It is a fuzzy set of {0, 1, 2, 3, ...}.

The significance of Daoism in the modern world cannot be underestimated. The concepts of Chinese styled freedom, tolerance, and temperance contained in its philosophy are closely related to modern values and important ideology for China's modern civilization (Wang, 2024, p. 484). Materialism is gradually to leave space for morality-oriented society, which is the traditional Chinese Culture, the long-lasting *dao*, hopefully forever.

## Conclusion

In ancient China, a harmonious kingdom was to be harbored without any conflict, where the natural rules observed became the model of all thoughts. As in the natural world, there were the similar life and death, flow of dynamic changes in everything, named *Dao*, *Tian* (heaven-like), or *Li* (reason-like) of natural order. Hence, the rationale for natural law and Daoism is of similarity.

In terms of political power, law and morality demonstrate differing status respectively, external and internal. With integrity, fairness and equality are of great necessity, revealing a flavor of justice. What is a good life? How to live well? What is the difference between ethical principles and rules? And are there such rules or do just laws have rules? Living well concentrates on the material world, while having a good life focuses more on mentality, the state of mind?

We are not, of course, equally endowed with talent. Talents of sorts cause inequality, justice not being able to come along. Living a life of dignity promotes self-respect. This is a matter of ethics.



Natural law and positive law are fighting each other, pushing them along with the God-oriented universal law, with the new natural law focusing on justice and fairness, while *daofa*, *dao*, and law-like general rules, proceeding with *lifa*, a kind of Confucian law, man-made law in Chinese feudal society thousands of years ago, alienated and complemented mutually. The daoist freedom of spontaneity and the self-so liberty create the great Daoist law, harboring the people-centered concept.

Sure, there are similarities and differences between the daoist law and the natural law. The former is concentrated on the non-coercive governance under the collectivist unity of heaven-like *Tian Dao* and human being, while the latter is rooted in the god-dominated individualism. Daoism and the natural law can be regarded as a somewhat soft law, compared with the man-made hard law. Different tunes can produce similar voices. The shadowy daoist law can be a good brother of the western rule of law and live with the differences.

The principle of *Dao* and law with *dao* and *tian* (god-like monster), the non-coercive guidance, is the lawless law, fewer actions of the authority with more involvement of the civilians, which is the ideal notion in the ancient China. This understanding of jurisprudence or political philosophy, is maintaining its place in the modern world, getting well along with rationality and reason, justice and fairness in the natural law.

### References

- Chen, X. (ed.). (2018). *Foundation of Daoism*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press.
- Gu, H. H. (2012). The Beauty of Natural Law is in the Eye of the Beholder with an argument about the paper by Zheng Yongliu—Is the natural law the first lady in the time? *Legal System and Society*, 21(5), 177-179.
- Guo, Z. F. (2007). Talks about Natural Law. *The New Orient*, 13(6), 39-41.
- Murphy, M. C. (2007). *Natural Law and Practical Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Simmonds, N. E. (2008). *Central issues in jurisprudence—Justice, law and rights*. London: Sweet & Maxwell Limited.
- Wacks, R. (2012). *Understanding jurisprudence—An introduction to legal theory* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wang, B. (2024). *Nothing of emptiness and spontaneity of Ziran*. Beijing: Peking University Press.
- Wang, Y. H. (2012). The “Kidnapped” Natural Law—Remarks on the paper by Zheng Yongliu—Is the natural law the first lady in the time? *Chinese Journal of Law*, 59, 79-80.
- Wei, J. D. (2014). The beauty of water—The ultimate aesthetic ideal of Laozi aesthetic personality. *Journal of Gansu Normal Colleges*, 19(3), 127-129.
- Yi, L. G. (2020). Chuang Tzu and indigenization of communication studies. *Journalism & Communication Review*, 91(6), 99-110.
- Zhou, W. K., Zhou, Z. P., & Ye, X. D. (2018). The conceptual analysis of natural law and Daoist law. *Journal of Taiyuan University of Technology* (Social Science Edition), 2018(2), 20-24.