Some Reflections on the Study of "East Asian Confucianisms": Its Rationale and Its Problematiques

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[Abstract]

The purpose of this article is not to repeat the cliché that Confucianism is the *sine qua non* in East Asian civilization, but that a paradigm of "East Asian Confucianisms" can open up a brand new vista for the study of Confucian traditions in East Asia. What I am trying to argue in the essay is that we have to get out of the grotto of "national learning," which takes state-centrism as the basis of Confucianism. Instead, we have to consider the development of Confucianism in a broader East Asian perspective. By contextualizing Confucianism in East Asian cultures and societies, we find ourselves in a better position to appreciate the diversity and variety of the problematiques of East Asian Confucian traditions.

Concretely, this essay offers an explanation of how legitimate studying "East Asian Confucianisms" is, and how promising it is as new research. Section One explains Tsuda Sôkichi's (津田左右吉, 1873-1961) doubts on the validity of the notion of "East Asian Civilization." Section Two confirms "East Asian Confucianisms" as a valid new field of study, with rich and distinct "unity in diversity." Section Three, on "The Problematique," goes on to explain that seeing Confucianism in the wide perspective of East Asia opens up a novel vista for future investigation with new questions hitherto unknown. Section Four summarizes the entire essay.

Keywords: East Asia, Confucianisms, Tsuda Sôkichi, Tokugawa Japan, Choson Korea, China

「東亞儒學」研究的理論基礎與問題意識：全球化時代的視野

黃俊傑

【中文提要】

本文探討「東亞儒學」作爲一個新的研究領域之可行性、理由及新問題意識。本文第一節首先討論津田左右吉（1873-1961）反對「東亞文化」或「東洋精神」的主張，指出津田學說潛藏著方法論的個體論傾向，並且浸潤在蔑視中國的時代氛圍之中。本文第二節從兩個角度分析「東亞儒學」作爲研究領域之所以成立的理由在於：在歷史進程中，「東亞儒學」有其發展的整體性與思想的相似性；在21 世紀人文研究中，「東亞儒學」的研究應聚焦於東亞各國的主體性發展過程之中，而非抽離於各國具體情境之上，因此，「東亞儒學」亦可作爲觀察東亞各國思想與文化的指標或竹內好（1910-1977）所謂的「方法」。

本文第三節指出，作爲新研究領域的「東亞儒學」包含諸多新問題意識，其犖犖大者有二：（1）中國儒家價值理念與東亞周邊國家地域特性之緊張與融合；（2）東亞周邊地區儒者的「文化認同」與「政治認同」之二重結構及其張力。本文結論指出，「東亞儒學」的提法，並不是一種「折射的東方主義」，也不是一種東亞的新「國學」，而是以東亞爲視野，以儒家價值爲核心，以東亞文化爲脈絡的新研究領域。「東亞儒學」中潛藏著豐富的精神資源，可以作爲亞洲人參與21 世紀文明對話的基礎。

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is not to repeat the cliché that Confucianism is the *sine qua non* in East Asian civilization, but that a paradigm of "East Asian Confucianisms" can open up a brand new vista for the study of Confucian traditions in East Asia. What I am trying to argue in the essay is that we have to get out of the grotto of "national learning," which takes state-centrism as the basis of Confucianism. Instead, we have to consider the development of Confucianism in a broader East Asian perspective. By contextualizing Confucianism in East Asian cultures and societies, we find ourselves in a better position to appreciate the diversity and variety of the problematiques of East Asian Confucian traditions.

Concretely, this essay offers an explanation of how legitimate studying "East Asian Confucianisms" is, and how promising it is as a new field of study. Section One explains Tsuda Sôkichi's (津田左右吉, 1873-1961) doubts on the validity of the notion of "East Asian Civilization." Section Two confirms "East Asian Confucianism" as a valid new field of study, with rich and distinct "unity in diversity." Section Three, on The Problematiques, goes on to explain that seeing Confucianism in the wide perspective of East Asia opens up a novel vista for future investigation with new questions hitherto unknown. Section Four summarizes the entire essay.

1. The Possibility

Our position on the legitimacy of "East Asian Confucianisms" as a field of study must begin with Tsuda Sôkichi's objection to the idea of "East Asian civilization." A guiding thread in Tsuda Sôkichi's enormous scholarship is the idea that Japanese culture and Chinese culture are completely different, and therefore the ideas of "East Asian Civilization" and "East Asian Spirit" exist only in cultural imagination.

He insisted that the Japanese lifestyle differs completely from that of the Chinese, especially in clan and social organization, political style and customs. He saw nothing in common between Japan and China, for that, as Tsuda Sôkichi stated, the two differ in ethnicity, language, and even species. Furthermore, regional conditions, geographic, climatic, and other causes have resulted in the differences between them in clothing, food, shelter and social psychology. He quoted Sakuma Shôzan (佐久間象山, 1811-1864) to further explain that the expression "East Asia" gained general cultural currency only in the nineteenth century. In fact, there was nothing substantial to the concept of "East Asia."[1]

Surveying all these, we realize that certain features of Tsuda Sôkichi's intellectual background inclined him to deny the idea of an encompassing East Asian Civilization. He was a strong supporter of the Meiji regime's new culture and did not hesitate to show his disdain for the Chinese culture. Tsuda Sôkichi's writings, repeatedly stressing the gap between these two cultures, convey his stance clearly. However, as Masubuchi Tatsuo (增淵龍夫, 1916-1983) pointed out,[2] Tsuda Sôkichi's

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[1] Tsuda Sôkichi, *Tsuda Sôkichi* Zenshû 津田左右吉全集 (Complete Works of Tsuda Sôkichi) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoden, 1965), Vol. 20, p. 195 and pp. 302-303.

[2] Masubichi Tatsuo, "Nihon no kindai shigakushi niokeru Chûgoku do Nihon: Tsuda Sôkichi no baii" 日本の近代史學史における中國と日本：津田左右吉の場合 (China and Japan in the History of Historiography of Modern Japan), in his *Rekishika no Tôjidaishi teki Kôsatsu ni tsuide* 歷史家の同

critique of Chinese culture was written from an outsider's point of view, in lack of an inner sympathetic understanding of China. Tsuda Sôkichi lived in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, when Japan underwent radical modernization and headed for militarism. It is no surprising that Tsuda Sôkichi was deeply influenced by the contemporary outlook of his time.

Another example was Naitô Konan (內藤湖南, 1866-1934). Although Naitô Konan believed that East Asian history had been formed and conditioned by the Chinese culture, yet he stressed only what he thought to be the advanced features of Chinese culture.[3] When he traveled in China, he felt uncomfortable with its people and customs. Sometimes, he was even distressed by their apparent barbarism.[4] Embracing the sense of Japanese superiority, he felt out of place when he visited the new Japanese colony, Taiwan, and insisted that the Taiwanese did not deserve equal rights under the Japanese Empire.[5]

Slightly earlier, Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤諭吉, 1834-1901), a pivotal architect of modern Japan, had stated in an influential work that the Western powers represented the goal of progress. From his point of view, European powers and America were the most civilized, Asian Turkey, China and Japan were half-developed, and African and Australian nations were barbaric. In addition to the classification, he considered China moved backward in the evolutionary stages of civilization.[6]

This predilection of worshiping the West as the best and looking down on Asian cultures (especially the Chinese one) was characteristic of contemporary Japanese

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時代史的考察について (A Historian's Observation of Contemporary History) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoden, 1983), pp. 3-48.

[3] Naitô Konan, *Naitô Konan Zenshû* 內藤湖南全集 (Complete Works of Naitô Konan) (Tokyo: Chikuma shoden, 1944), Vol. 1, p. 9.

[4] *Naitô Konan Zenshû*, Vol. 2, p. 75.

[5] *Naitô Konan Zenshû*, Vol. 2, pp. 394-396.

[6] Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Bunmeiron no Gairaiku* 文明論の概略 (Introduction to the Theory of Civilizations) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoden, 1997), pp. 25-55.

thinking, since the country had just completed the Meiji modernization. Drawing a firm line between Japan and China, Tsuda Sôkichi not only made his scorn toward China obvious, but also reflected the *Zeitgeist* of his age.

Still, Tsuda Sôkichi's critique of the idea of East Asian Civilization bears some methodological suggestions for the possibility of "East Asian Confucianisms," and implies a kind of methodological individualism. According to him, "East Asian Confucianisms" do not exist. What exist are those entities with unique features, such as Chinese Confucianism, Japanese Confucianism, and Korean Confucianism. Thus, comprehensive "East Asian Confucianisms" exist only when we can see and examine Confucianism in each of these cultures.

2. The Rationale

(a) East Asian Confucianisms as Reality of History

The rationale for East Asian Confucianisms as a field of study is twofold. On the one hand, East Asian Confucianisms embrace the Confucian traditions of China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. On the other hand, the varied Confucian traditions in these cultures did not form a mechanical assemblage, but rather a comprehensive, developing, and systematic whole. An explanation is as follows.

East Asian Confucianisms genetically display a developmental holism. Confucianism, as is well-known, originated in Shandong, China, two thousands years ago. By the sixteenth century, with Korea serving as a critical bridge, it had spread to Japan and occupied a major place in the country's philosophical mainstream. During the Tokugawa period, Japanese Zhu Xi (Huian, 晦庵, 1130-1200) school of Confucianism began to take shape, due to Zhu Xi studies being greatly influential in Chôson (1391-1910), especially in the writings of Korean scholar Yi Tuigae (李退溪,

1501-1570), most of whose works were published in Japan as well. Then a Ming (1368-1644) scholar Lo Qinshun (羅欽順, 1466-1547) revised Zhu Xi's philosophy in his *Kunzhiji* (困知記, *Knowledge Acquired through Adversity*), a book of profound impact on the Tokugawa intellectual world. Lo's book was printed in Japan on the basis of the Korean version.[7]

Besides through Korea, Chinese Confucian classics also reached Japan directly by way of seas. Scholars report that the Chinese classics began to appear in Japan from the ninth century, and by the nineteenth century, 70-80% of the Chinese classics could be found there. In addition to classics, Japanese thought and culture were under great influence of other Chinese publications such as histories and biographies, local gazettes, law books, etc.[8]

In the historical development of East Asian Confucianisms, many classics—together with ideas found in them—were transmitted from China to Korea and Japan, as ripple effects of a stone dropped into a pond, to form developmental holism.

By the same token, Confucianism throughout East Asia exhibits a similar integral pattern. Given the fact that Confucianism in China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan has regional features, Confucians in different places read the same texts of Confucian classics, such as the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Thus, they all came to ponder on similar ideas in the Confucian tradition such as what "A single thread to connect my Way" (*Analects*, 4:15 and 15:3) is, "At fifty, I comprehend the mandate of Heaven," (*Analects*, 2:4) "To learn something, and

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[7] Abe Yoshio 阿部吉雄, *Nihon Shûshigaku to Chosen* 日本朱子學と朝鮮 (Japanese Zhu Xi School of Neo-Confucianism and Korea) (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku shuppankai, 1965, 1975), p. 19.

[8] Yan Shaodang 嚴紹璗 ed., *Riben cang Songren wenji shanben gouchen* 日本藏宋人文集善本鉤沉 (Inquiries into the Rare Books of Song Dynasty Literati's Corps Preserved in Japan) (Hangzhou: Hangzhou daxue chubanshe 1996), pp. 1-2; Ôba Ôsamu 大庭修, Qi Yinping 戚印平 tr., *Jianghu shidai Zhongguo dianji liubo Riben zhi yanjiu* 江戶時代中國典籍流播日本之研究 (A Study of the Dissemination of Chinese Texts in Tokugawa Japan) (Hangzhou: Hangzhou daxue chubanshe,1998).

to try it out at due intervals," (*Analects*, 1:1) etc.

All such problems constitute a series of questions commonly shared by East Asian Confucians. Consequently, a Confucian system of thought with East Asian characteristics came to emerge and exhibit a sort of "family resemblance," which can be aptly called "East Asian Confucianisms." Such Confucian family of ideas and problems conveys the sense that East Asian Confucianisms form a *system* of thought.

(b) "East Asian Confucianisms" as the Method of the Humanities

Now, such characterization of the genetic process of East Asian Confucianisms as the ripples spreading in every direction, exhibiting a simultaneous developmental and systematic comprehensiveness, would easily leave the reader an impression that Chinese Confucianism is the core or center, whereas Confucian ideas in other places were peripheral.

Recently, Koyasu Nobukuni (子安宣邦, 1933-) cast doubts on such impression of upholding Chinese Confucianism as the only center of the East Asian Confucianisms as a whole. As far as he was concerned, the impression would initiate a political center-periphery dichotomy and cultural origin-reception tension. Such a view amounts to an intellectual version of pre-modern Chinese imperialism.[9] The ripple effect sends forth Chinese cultural chauvinism.

Koyasu's doubts are right on the mark. The monistic approach of taking China's Confucian tradition as the central culture would be to adopt the civilized-barbaric distinction embraced by the Chinese hegemony as the basis of our developmental explanation. Isn't it little wonder then that Tsuda would despise China with

[9] Koyasu Nobukuni, *Ajiawa Dô Katarare tekidaka — Kindai Nihon no oriuentarizumu* — 「アジア」ほどうかたられてきたか — 近代日本のオリエンタリズム (How can Asia be Spoken: Orientalism in Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Fujihara shoden, 2003), pp. 171-198.

Japan-centrism and Japanese chauvinism in return?

China's cultural egocentrism was deep-rooted; its imperial rulers thought they were the center of the world and looked down on the surrounding peoples as they were barbarians. According to Wang Ermin (王爾敏, 1927-), the term "zhongguo" (中國, central kingdom) was used in several senses in the pre-Qin classics, usually involving a center-border outlook, thus suggesting that the Chinese monistic cultural outlook was formed very early indeed.[10] However, as I have argued elsewhere,[11] the Japanese intellectuals form the seventeenth century have taken "Zhongguo" to refer to their own homeland, Japan, because they felt that Japan had adopted Confucius' Way and the authentic spirit in the *Annals of the Spring and Autumn* more adequately than had China. Moreover, the idea of "Zhongguo" in the contemporary Taiwanese worldview can be divided into cultural China and political China. While these two elements are not completely cut off from each other, there is a degree of tension and struggle between them.

This monistic political-cultural outlook[12] should have collapsed in history with the downfall of the Qing Empire (1644-1911). The new cultural-political orders of the twenty-first century are formed with the strong affirmation of cultural pluralism, on which "East Asian Confucianisms" is espoused in Taiwan today. Acknowledging the varied Confucian traditions in East Asia, as manifested in China, Korea, Japan and

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[10] Wang Ermin 王爾敏, "'Zhongguo' mingcheng suoyuan jiqi jindai quanshi" 「中國」名稱溯源及其近代詮釋 (The Origin of "China" and Its Interpretation in Modern Times), in *Zhongguo jindai sixiang shilun* 中國近代思想史論 (Essays on Modern Chinese Intellectual History) (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1977), pp. 441-480. Cf. Michael Loewe, "The Heritage Left to the Empires," in Michael Loewe, Edward I. Shaughnessy eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China, From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 992-995.

[11] Chun-chieh Huang, "The Idea of 'Zhongguo' and Its Transformation in Early Modern Japan and Contemporary Taiwan," *Nihon Kanbungaku Kenkyû* 日本漢文學研究, no. 2 (2007, March), pp. 398-408.

[12] John K. Fairbank ed., *The Chinese World Order* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 1; Lien-sheng Yang, "Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order," in Fairbank ed., *op. cit.*, p. 20.

Taiwan, we see that Confucianism in each place expresses its own particular strengths, weaknesses, and its rich multi-faceted contents.

For all that, while each regional version of Confucianism responds to the specific features and requirements of that locale, there is a clear commonality within their visible diversities. That is, Confucians of different places pay the same respect to Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and Mencius (371-289 B.C.) as their spiritual forebears, while their specific needs and requirements respond to the classics, thereby opened a new vista of Confucian interpretation, constructing localized Confucianism reflective of each region's specific ethos. In short, the significant commonality of East Asian Confucianisms is the "plurality." As such, the common framework of the Confucian tradition does not foster cultural monism but provides a prism to highlight the rich diversity of East Asian cultures.

Viewing "East Asian Confucianisms" in this way makes the study of "East Asian Confucianisms" an example of "method"[13] of studying the humanities. Against the trap of assuming China as the "center" when treating "East Asian Confucianisms" as historical reality, taking "East Asian Confucianisms" as a "method" illuminates concrete processes whereby the alleged "peripheral" areas form their respective versions of Confucianism.

"Confucianism" interpreted in this sense becomes a parameter for the formation of the *subjectivities* of each and every East Asian region. What is important to observe is the "process" of such specific construction of subjectivity, be it Japan or Korea, *not* "authenticity" or "orthodoxy" of specific regional Confucianism. "East Asian Confucianisms" are not something ready-cast, nor a frame of thought that exists

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[13] For reflections on Asia as "method," see Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910-1977), "Hôho toshite no Ajia" 方法としてのアジア (Asia as Method), in *Takeuchi Yoshimi Zenshû* 竹内好全集 (Complete Works of Takeuchi Yoshimi) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1981), Vol. 5, esp. pp. 114-115.

above the concrete process of development of Confucianism in Korea, Japan and Taiwan, but exists only in the interactive formations among East Asian regions, including China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

3. The Problematiques

The discussion on the problematiques follows the foregoing consideration that East Asian Confucianisms reflect the diversity of regional characteristics, and that its comprehensive integrity is not a mechanical assemblage of regional Confucian traditions, but some overall family congeniality in thinking. In the third part of the article, I would discuss the legitimized field of "East Asian Confucianisms," which opens up new inquiries with new significance.

One repercussion of the novel vista mentioned above is Chinese Confucianism itself. If we consider the study of Confucianism only in the context of Chinese history, even though we register the changes and differences among dynasties and movements, such as Han Confucianism, Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, Qing Confucianism, etc., our view would have remained filtered through the official examination system and its related educational channels. "Chinese Confucianism" would have remained closely tied to the Chinese imperial order, which played as the principal platform of its dissemination.

Such Confucian values under Chinese imperial order could not have produced tensions between political and cultural identity. On the contrary, traditionally China strongly promulgated sociopolitical monism, to the extent that the orientations of the

value themselves exhibited a high degree of uniformity.[14] And it was partly resulted from the influence of the overall imperial monism that the political and cultural identity remained fused as one through two thousand years of Chinese imperial dynasties.

Even exiled Chinese Confucians show such unity of political and cultural identities. Zhu Shunshui (朱舜水, 1600-1682), a scholar of the late-Ming and early-Qing, is a prime example. At the fall of Ming and the establishment of Qing Empire, Zhu left for Japan in 1659, where he plotted to seek military support to restore Ming dynasty. With the recognition of the Ming reign as the political identity, Zhu supposed that political authority was rooted in culture. He wrote to a Japanese friend, lamenting "recently, the Chinese empire fell because they had abandoned the teachings of the sages and rushed to open the competitive road of profit."[15]

Staying in Japan for twenty two years, his political and cultural identities remained fused as one, often lamenting, "the only place for Confucius and Yan Hui was China, Yao and Shun were not born in remote lands;"[16] "China was the cultural center and Japan a border region, and the Japanese had never seen a Yao or Shun because they did not cultivate the Way."[17] Zhu was not an exception but a common example representing the Chinese attitude, evinced throughout Chinese history.

However, once we expand our vision to the whole East Asia beyond China proper, our studies of Confucianism will be liberated from Chinese regionalism, and infused with new vitality of greater breadth and diversity. Set in the larger context of

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[14] Cf. Donald W. Treagold, *The West in Russia and China: Religious and Secular Thought in Modern Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), Vol. 1, p. xxii.

[15] Zhu Shunshui 朱舜水, *Zhu Shunshui ji* 朱舜水集 (Collected Essays of Zhu Shunshui) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), Vol. 7, p. 182. Cf. my "Lun dongya yimin ruzhe di liangge liangnanshi 論東亞遺民儒者的兩個兩難式" (On the Two Predicaments in Confucianism as Formulated by the Leftover Subjects in East Asia), *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (June, 2006), pp. 61-80.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 170.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 170.

East Asia, the study of Confucianism gives rise to many new topics. It is up to us to explore the terrain and choose the most promising ones and to find new wine in the renovated bottles of time-honored Confucianism. Among all the new themes, the two that merit our studies the most are to be discussed in the following.

(1) Tensions and Fusions between Chinese Confucian Values and Specific Characteristics of Other Regions in East Asia:

Appearing in the Shandong peninsula of China two millennia ago, Confucianism was merely a local wisdom. Yet, as it developed over the centuries, Confucianism had molded a value system, which was eventually accepted all over East Asia. In the eyes of East Asian Confucians outside China, "China" was a great inevitable "Other." When examining the overall historical rise and development of Confucianism, one might find many Confucian notions, such as the distinction between Chinese and barbarian (*huayi zhibian* 華夷之辨), *zhong* (忠, loyalty, doing one's best) and *xiao* (孝, filial piety), strongly reflected specific features of Chinese culture, intimately connected with its agrarian economy, clan society, and authoritarian order. All of these notions were deeply rooted in and colored by Chinese culture.

It is no surprising that, as they were spread outside China to Korea and Japan, tensions appeared due to the difference of regional conditions. For example, Confucianism had to be adjusted to fit into Japan's imperial feudal conditions, which means the assimilation of Confucianism was to localize foreign ideas in Japanese soil.

This sort of tension caused Confucian ideas to change into something else, and twisted it into diverse versions of East Asian Confucianisms. Two examples reveal the diversity of Confucianism in East Asia.

First, since Song dynasty (960-1279), Confucius and Mencius were given equal prominence in China. Mencius-tablet was placed in the Confucius Temple as the

"Second Sage." As Confucianism spread to Japan, the situation was modified to suit Japan. Some passages in Confucius' *Analects* were given new interpretations. Confucius considered (*Analects*, 9:14) settling among the "Nine Barbaric Tribes (*Jiuyi* 九夷) of the east"; Hayashi Razan (林羅山, 1583-1657), a Zhu Xi scholar of early Tokugawa Japan, thought "*Jiuyi*" to refer to Japan even as Japan was the country of gentlemen.[18] Itô Jinsai (伊藤仁齋, 1627-1705) drew on the general meaning of the "Sage mind" and broke down the barrier erected by Confucius' Chinese-barbarian distinction and broadened the meaning of this passage.[19]

Because Mencius' revolutionary political thought clashed with Tokugawa feudalism, many Japanese Confucians attacked Mencius. As early as in the seventeenth century, Ogyû Sorai (荻生徂徠, 1666-1728) proposed to remove Mencius-tablet, one of the four sages and ten wise men, from the Confucian Temple, for Mencius was given to dispute.[20] Sorai's follower Dazai Shundai (太宰春台, 1680-1747) wrote two tracts criticizing Mencius. Because of the Sorai school's excessive critique of Mencius, scholars of Itô Jinsai's school were compelled to launch a critique of their Mencius-criticisms. The debate between the two schools continued into the nineteenth century.[21] Such debate illustrates the basic tension between Mencius' political thought and the sociopolitical circumstances in Tokugawa Japan.

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[18] Hayashi Razan 林羅山, *Hayashi Razan Bumsho* 林羅山文集 (Literary Corps of Hayashi Razan) (Kyoto: Kyoto shisekikai, 1979), Vol. 36, pp. 408-409.

[19] Itô Jinsai 伊藤仁齋, *Rongo Kogi* 論語古義 (Classical Meanings in the *Analects*), in Seiki Giichirô 關儀一郎 ed., *Nihon Meika Shishò-Chûshaku Zenshu* 日本名家四書註釋全書 (Complete Works of the Annotations of the Renowned Japanese Scholars) (Tokyo: Hô Shuppan, 1973), Vol. 3, p. 32。

[20] Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠, *Tenyen Ippitsu* 蘐園一筆 (First Corps of Tenyen), *Nihon Julin Shôsho* 日本儒林叢書 (Series on Japanese Confucianism), Vol. 1, pp. 1-3.

[21] Cf. Zhang Kunjiang 張崑將, *Riben Dechuan shidai guxuepai zhi wangdao zhengzhilun* 日本德川時代古學派之王道政治論 (Theory of Kingly Governance of the Classical School of Japanese Confucianism in Tokugawa Era) (Taipei: Taida chuban zhongxin, 2005), Ch. 5.

Secondly, some ideas in Chinese Confucianism were enclothed with new interpretations when they reached Japan and Korea. The meaning of such core ideas as "*gong*" (公, public, fair), "*si*" (私, personal, private), "*xin*" (心, mind-heart) went through radical changes in Japan. "*Xin*" in Japan means "spontaneous," "natural," "unified," and "receptive medium," while in China, it has a "cosmic character," an "empty" "lively" entity full of ontological significance.[22] The expression "cosmic character" refers to the heart-mind's creative activity in and of the world, involving producing and living together, feeling and responding to one another, and the interactive relations that gives rise to natural law.

As for the Japanese interpretations of "*zhong*" and "*xiao*," two basic Confucian notions, are entirely different from the Chinese ones. Zhang Kunjiang (張崑將, 1967-) recently researched on the meaning of "*xiao*" for the Wang Yangming(王陽明, 1472-1528) school from Nakae Tôju (中江藤樹, 1608-1648) to Ôhashi Chûsai (大塩中齋, 1793-1837), and the connotation of "*zhong*" for the militarist school from Yamaga Sokô (山鹿素行, 1622-1685) to Yoshida Shôyin (吉田松陰, 1830-1859). Zhang discovered that in Japan "*zhong*" and "*xiao*" were both influenced by the local Shintoism, the Japanese indigenous thought.[23]

These examples serve to illustrate the diversity of Confucianisms in East Asia. Far from the uniform appearance of Chinese Confucianism, the rich diversity is rooted in the various local milieus and specific ethnic cultures of those regions.

(2) The History of East Asian Confucianisms exhibits Duality of Cultural and

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[22] Mizoguchi Yûzô **溝口雄三**, *Chugoku no kô do si* **中國の公と私** (The "Public" and the "Private" in China) (Tokyo: Genbun shuppan, 1995).

[23] Zhang Kunjiang, *Dechuan Riben "Zhong" "Xiao" gainian di xingcheng yu fazhan* **德川日本「忠」「孝」概念的形成與發展** (The Formation and Development of the Notions of "Loyalty" and "Filial Piety" in Tokugawa Japan) (Taipei: Taida chuban zhongxin, 2005).

Political Identities among Non-Chinese Confucians.

In China, all Confucians share the same values, and the Han people established orthodox rule to fuse political and cultural identities into one. Yet in the cases of other East Asian countries, Confucians admired Confucius and Mencius, absorbed the Confucian values, took Confucianism into their cultural identity, *and* were subject to another political identity.

For instance, in the sixteenth century, Hayashi Razan, follower of Zhu Xi, said: "Japan's flourishing culture can rival that of China."[24] The early Tokugawa Confucian and Militarist, Yamaga Sogô, compared Japan with China and asserted the former was better.[25] Japanese Confucians considered Chinese rules foreign, and never fused their Chinese cultural identity with Japanese political identity.

In sum, these two new areas in the study of East Asian Confucianisms show how the study can bring in new questions to illuminate traditional Chinese Confucianism, introduce new research methods, thereby pour new wine into old renovated bottles, and conduce to new researches.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, we have argued that studies of East Asian Confucianisms are a new field in the age of globalization of the twenty-first century, not to find in Asia a "Reflexive Orientalism" to counteract Western studies, much less a self-absorbed and self-assertive "national learning" or *guoxue* 國學. Instead, "East Asian

[24] Hayashi Rozan, *Hayashi Rozan Zenshu*, Vol. 48, p. 560.

[25] Yamaga Sôgo, *Chûcho Jijitsu* 中朝事實 in Hirose Naruse 廣瀨豐 ed., *Yamaga Sôgo Zenshû* 山鹿素行全集 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoden, 1942), Vol. 13, p. 369.

Confucianisms" is a *sui generis* and self-formed systematic study. It is not just a mechanical piecemeal assemblage of regional versions of Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese Confucianism, but, as Confucians in each of these places recite and are baptized in the same classics, they aspire to become the sages who transcend regional limitations into Confucian core values. This common core of Confucianism forms a system of thought, without the stigmas of center-border or means-end discriminations. "East Asian Confucianisms" is a field of study that rids us of the vestiges of boundaries and limitations that still remain in the present time and takes in East Asia as a whole. In the various traditions of East Asian Confucianisms there exist important spiritual resources to facilitate dialogues among world civilizations in our present era of globalization.