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Chinese Confucianism, Japanese Practice

Abstract

The culture of a nation is the DNA of the nation and significantly influences the direction of the nation's development and its foreign policy. China is the birth country of Confucianism; and Confucianism has been the mainstream of Chinese traditional culture for over 2,000 years. Japanese civilization has a Chinese origin, including Confucianism and the civil service examination system. Since Confucianism was introduced into Japan in the fourth century, it has gradually become an integrated part of Japanese culture. To improve China–Japan relations, it is necessary to consider the similarities and differences of practicing Confucianism in the two countries. This paper attempts to take on this task by emphasizing how Japan has Japanized Confucianism while the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has used Confucianism to justify its legitimacy. This paper will argue that Japan does not simply copy Chinese Confucianism, but has selectively practiced Confucianism and used it for its own national agenda.

Keywords: *Confucianism, Chinese politics, Japanese modernization*

1. Introduction

Confucianism was born in China, but Confucian influence goes far beyond China. Confucianism has gradually become a part of Japanese culture since it was introduced to Japan. Confucian influence has remained strong despite its modernization and Westernization since the Meiji Revolution. Japan does not simply copy Confucianism, but has selectively practiced it. What are the differences between China and Japan in practicing Confucianism? What is the driving force of Japanizing Confucianism?

How does Japan utilize Confucianism in modern times? This paper will address these questions and argue that China has used Confucianism mainly for political purposes from ancient times to the present. By contrast, since the end of World War II, Japanese Confucianism has served the Japanese modernization and democratization and helped Japan integrate its nation into the liberal international system. Thus, Japan is on the right path in practicing Confucianism.

2. Characteristics of Chinese Confucianism

Confucius (551–479 B.C.) was the founder of Confucianism. The term “Confucius’s teaching” differs from the term “Confucianism,” because it only represents the early stage of Confucianism. The development of Confucianism is a dynamic process. After Confucius’s death, “his followers split into eight distinct schools all claiming to be the legitimate heir to the Confucian legacy” (Tu, 1998). The emphasis of Confucianism in different periods and different countries is different, because Confucius’s teaching was reinterpreted by various scholars who were not necessarily “devoted of the Confucian Way” (Nylan, 2001). In this sense, the term “Confucianism” is not singular, but plural.

Confucius’s teaching involves a wide range of fields. What is the original intention of Confucius’s teaching? In Confucius’s time, China experienced a great transformation from an heredity system to a hierarchical system. The old social order was broken (*li beng*) as wars and violence started occurring across the land in the Warring States Period. Through Confucius’s eyes, the old social order was the best because it was compatible with *li* (propriety). Confucius was determined to bring society back to the traditional system, in Chinese *ke ji fu li* (The Analects) – conquer yourself and return to ritual — was his primary motivation, and the ultimate goal of Confucius’s teaching was to maintain the traditional social order. Thus, Confucius’s teaching was not a “precise moral orientation, but a professional training with the general goals of state service” (Nylan, 2001). The original intention of Confucius’s teaching was to restore trust in the government, to transform society into a moral community, to bring comfort to the old, to have trust in friends, and to cherish the young through practicing the five constant virtues. Confucius’s teaching “is hierarchical oriented political ideology which is essentially the same as Marxism in a political perspective” (Tu, 2012).

To serve his central political goal, Confucius developed various basic principles of his teaching, including the five constant virtues: *jen* (benevolence), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *zhi* (knowledge/wisdom), and *xin* (sincerity), Five Relationships (ruled is subject to ruler; son is subject to father; wife is subject to husband; younger is subject to elder; and friends must trust each other), the three obediences (a woman was required to obey her father before marriage, her husband during married life, and her sons in widowhood), and the four virtues (fidelity, physical charm, propriety in speech, and efficiency in needlework). All these principles are about the regulations of human relations and social norms, and they worked together to maintain the hierarchical social order. Confucius put it this way: "Let the father be indeed father, and the son son; let the elder brother be indeed elder brother, and the younger brother younger brother, let the husband be indeed husband, and the wife wife: then will the family be in its normal state. Bring the family to that state, and all under heaven will be established" (*The Book of Changes*).

Obviously, Confucius intended to support the ruling class, yet, the first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang (221–205 B.C), did not realize the relevance of Confucianism to the ruling class. He believed that the tool to check human selfishness and depravity was law and severe punishment which could help him retain the crown forever, so he campaigned against Confucian scholars, burned Confucian books, and buried Confucian scholars alive, while he practiced Legalism and overly used his coercive power to kill countless innocent people. As a result, the Qin dynasty was replaced by the Han dynasty just 15 years after the Qin was established. Dong Zhongshu suggested the emperor Han Wu Di (141–87 BC) worship Confucius's teaching only and abolish all other schools of thought. The emperor accepted his suggestion and dismissed all non-Confucian scholars from the government. Confucianism gradually became the dominant Chinese ideology in imperial China through government support and the civil service examination.

Confucius's teaching mainly played three roles in Chinese feudal society. First, Confucius's teaching combined feudal familial values with political theory to support the patriarchal social order. According to Confucius's teaching, all under heaven are of one family, and all nations are of one people. China is an enlarged family and the emperor is the father of the nation. The individual is not the center of society, but the state dominates society, and the emperor holds absolute power over government and

society (Moody, 1988, p. 251). Hence Confucianism “valued hierarchy in both political and social spheres” (Lieberthal, 1995, p. 7).

Second, Confucius’s teaching required everyone to follow the principle of absolute loyalty to consolidate the monarchical system. The theory of the union of heaven and the individual is the foundation of the principle of loyalty. *Tian* (Heaven) is the superior power beyond human control, and the Chinese emperor was the mediator between heaven and society. The Chinese people must obey the will of heaven and the will of the mediator – the emperor. Loyalty is the spirit of Confucius’s teaching and the eternal truth of the universe. In imperial China, the Chinese people had no choice but to obey the will of the emperor/heaven. A person had to die if the emperor wanted him or her dead. No one was permitted to violate the emperor’s teachings of the deceased and the forefathers’ discipline (Greel, 1975).

Third, Confucius’s teaching rejected the principle of rule of law and legitimized the feudal governance of rule of man. According to Confucius’s teaching, a good society is maintained by a moral obligation, not by an obligatory law because the legitimacy of the monarchical government was based on the unconditional obedience of the common people (Schwartz, 1993, p. 32). Confucius says, “Lead the people by laws and regulate them by punishments, and the people will try to avoid wrongdoing but will have no sense of shame” (Wilson & Greenblatt, 1981, p. 104). Only one person laid down the law and put it into practice. Thus, Confucius’s teaching legitimizes a single man to rule the entire country without check or balance.

When the highly centralized political system was taken to an extreme, family ethics, social organization, the political system, economic activity, and daily life were controlled by the emperor’s power. Confucius’s teaching did not encourage individual initiative, but taught the Chinese people to obey political authority. When the traditional Chinese political system reached its height, the confrontation between Confucianism and new Chinese culture became unavoidable. In the mid-1910s, Chinese liberal intellectuals began to advocate modern democracy by challenging Confucianism. Since the nationalist government’s withdraw from mainland China to Taiwan (1949), it has continued to hold onto the basic Confucian values in school and social life. In mainland China, Mao Zedong regarded Confucianism as “four olds” (old ideology, old tradition, old customs, and old culture). In the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), Mao followed the first Chinese emperor’s step, burned Confucian books and exiled intellectuals. In the post-Mao era, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has

changed its attitude toward Confucianism attempting to promote state sponsored Confucianism. In 2004, the CCP began to use the Confucian conception of “harmonious society” to develop the socialist system with Chinese characteristics. The opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics was the major event that attempted to link China’s recent achievements with its Confucian past. In 2010, China started to use Confucius as an explicit political tool to reward the world’s political figures in response to the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize which was awarded to Chinese political dissident, Liu Xiaobo (Sun, 2012). The Confucius Peace Prize Laureates include Russian president Putin (2011), the founding father of socialist Cuba Castro (2014), and the former Zimbabwe President Robert Gabriel Mugabe (2015). In addition, the Chinese government has developed Confucius Institutes around the world to expand its global political influence. By 2017, a total of 525 Confucius Institutes and 1,113 Confucius Classrooms had been put in place in 154 countries. According to *Xinhua*, China will have established 1,000 institutes by 2020. Apparently, China’s ambitious plan has faced great challenges from the mainstream of the international society in recent years.

Why does the Chinese government want to promote Confucianism not only at home but also abroad? It is because Chinese communism has lost its capacity to inspire the Chinese people: Confucianism could be the new moral foundation of the CCP to justify its legitimacy (Bell, 2010). The state-sponsored Confucianism is clearly driven by a political purpose – “to consolidate the leadership and ideological control of the Chinese Communist Party” (Wu, 2015). The CCP wants to use the key conception of Confucius’s teaching – loyalty – to legitimize the one-party system. In the post-Mao era, every administration of the CCP has called for the Chinese people to unite all their forces around the CCP, and unconditionally obey the top leader of the CCP. After Xi Jinping became President of China in 2012, he further centralized his power and made his lifelong presidency possible by amending the Constitution of China. Xi repeatedly emphasizes that the party leads everything: the east and the west; the party is the leader in all aspects of China including industry, agriculture, business, education, military affairs, and politics. The CCP sets Confucian principles for the Chinese people to follow: “be loyal to the party” and “follow the party unconditionally.” Recently (2019), the CCP has promoted the slogan “The Three Alls” (三个一切): All major matters are decided by Chairman Xi Jinping; all work must be responsible to Chairman Xi Jinping; all

actions must heed the direction of Chairman Xi Jinping (Gang, 2019). Now China is returning to classic Maoism and feudalism. Many have called Xi Jinping the 21st-century emperor of China. In this sense, the CCP has faithfully followed Confucius's original teaching to protect the interests of the CCP which conflicts with the liberal international order and universal values.

3. Driving Force of Japanese Confucianism

The influence of Confucianism goes far beyond China. All East Asian countries are culturally within the Confucian order (Morishima, 1982). Japan has been culturally and politically under the influence of Confucianism from the early Japanese civilization to the present. Japan's rise in the post-war era is remarkable. What is the driving force of Japan's post-war economic growth? It is driven by "Japanese spirit and Western technology" (Inagaki, 1992). Japanese spirit is a mixture of Confucianism and Buddhism in the Japanese context. According to an ancient Japanese text, *the Records of Ancient Matters*, Confucius's work, *the Analects*, was introduced to Japan around 400 AD (Levi, 2016). Japan began to adopt Confucianism in the seventh century based on the developmental model of China's Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). In medieval Japan, Confucianism had "a broader social impact on funeral rites, village life, and samurai households" (Yamashita, 2016, p. 27).

After Chinese Neo-Confucianism was introduced to Japan in the Edo/Tokugawa period (1603–1867), Japanese Confucian schools emerged and became vernacularized through maintaining social values and order. The Tokugawa state established Confucianism as "a kind of state philosophy," "the basis for the legal system and moral education" (Born, 2009). It gradually grew stronger and was widely spread through the middle strata of the population, emphasizing the importance of ethics, education and a hierarchical social order through teachings about how to conduct people's lives and govern a society. The influence of Confucianism became stronger than Buddhism, and the Japanese people recognized Confucianism as "a Japanese value instead of Confucian value" (Levi, 2016). In the Meiji period (1868–1912), Japan began to use Neo-Confucianism to theorize the status of samurai and laid the foundation for knowledge to boom (Yamashita, 2018). In the post-war era, Japan has taken a new path of practicing Confucianism.

However, the Japanese did not simply copy Confucianism, but selectively adopted Confucianism to fit their national agenda (Duncan, 2002). Fujiwara Seika (1561–1619) was the first Japanese who advocated the independence of Confucianism. In the 1930s, the movement of Confucianism became a strong supporter of the Great Japanese Empire by advocating the importance of Eastern thought. While absorbing the essence of Chinese Confucianism, the Japanese added some unique ideas, such as the “group consciousness of Japan” into Chinese Confucianism, making it closer to Japanese culture (Yan & Pan, 2010). The indigenous process of Confucianism is mainly driven by three factors in modern times.

First, pragmatism has become one of the important characteristics of Japanese strategic culture in modern times. Japan does not have fixed principles but only has pragmatic nationalism. Since the Meiji Revolution, driven by pragmatism, Japan has selectively practiced Confucian values in the Japanese context. Second, after the Meiji Revolution turned Japan into a Westernized nation, the basic conceptions of Confucius’s original teaching conflicted with modern democracy. This required Japanese people to re-interpret Confucianism in the new era. Third, the theory of Bushido demands Japan to shift the emphasis of Confucian practice. Bushido is the ethical norm and philosophy of samurais in Japanese feudal society and became the major cultural support system of the Japanese imperial system. Japan became a martial nation in the 17th century and viewed itself as “a nation of warriors,” so considered Bushido as the code of honor, discipline and morality of the warrior, or the way of the warrior. Bushido even became the basic code of conduct for much of Japanese society and the soul of Japan which dominated Japanese intellectual life from 1930–1945 (Flanagan, 2016). However, the central principle of Bushido is about responsibility and how to fulfill the responsibility. Seppuku is part of fulfilling a Samurai’s responsibility. The samurai put “justice” on the top of eight virtues of samurai. The other seven virtues are courage, benevolence, politeness, honesty, honor, loyalty and self-control. The spirit of Bushido was different from the spirit of Confucianism. According to Japanese military scholar Tsugaru Kodo (1682–1792), “Preaching that all people within the four seas should have prosperous and bountiful households and that everyone should be protected from poverty and suffering is the idle talk of vulgar Confucians” (Watanabe, 1912).

4. A New Path of Practicing Confucianism in Modern Japan

a. Japan Has Utilized Confucianism to Promote the Capitalist Market Economy

Confucius's original teaching discouraged the Chinese people from devoting themselves to economic and technological activities. According to Confucius, the gentleman follows righteousness, but the small man (*xiao ren*) pursues profit. Confucius emphasized his principle of values, such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge and sincerity, but discouraged people's pursuit of the material life. In Confucian society, Chinese people were divided into different ranks. Farmer, soldier and merchant were the ruled class, but politician, official, and Confucian scholars were the ruling class. Thus, Confucian society provided little opportunity or incentive for social production or scientific research (Lin, 1995). Zhu Xi, the founder of the Neo-Confucian school, required the Chinese people to keep justice and eliminate their desires. Mao Zedong totally rejected the capitalist economy by implementing his idea that "preferring to have socialist weeds instead of having capitalist seedlings" (Ren, 2004).

By contrast, Meiji leaders began to respond to international markets and accept capitalist principles of economic organization. Meiji scholars and politicians were convinced that Japan needed an ethical system to replace Buddhism during the transition of Westernizing Japan. Tokyo Professor Inoue Tetsujirō reworked Confucianism as the basis for a new national morality and philosophy for supporting a program of modern national morality. In 1827, Japanese economist Zusho Hirosato promoted Japanese economic reform and convinced Japanese leaders to believe that the liberal economy should not be only based on individual gain, but rather on the contributions to national power. They used Confucianism to justify the liberal economy by arguing that the government had "a moral obligation to protect and guide the people," and also that "a duty to guide economic activity for higher moral ends remained strong" (Sagers, 2006, p. 105). According to Weiming Tu (1992), Confucianism has played the same roles in developing the Japanese economy as Christian ethics played in the emergence of modern capitalism in Europe.

In the two decades after World War II, Japan became an economic powerhouse and the second richest country in the world. The Japanese

economic developmental model largely relies on the Confucian value system in addition to its social structure. Confucianism has contributed to the Japanese economy largely in three areas: helping to promote employees' enthusiasm by improving the personal relationships at the workplace, increasing employees' quality through improving education, and enhancing the ability of the government.

First, Japanese economic and business activities are built on interpersonal relationship. To the Japanese, the relationship between individuals is one between the subordinate and the superordinate based on those who are higher in rank (*sempai*) and those lower in rank (*kouhai*). Japanese people live essentially in a vertical society (Nakane, 1970). Although the structure of enterprises is hierarchical, bosses of Japanese enterprises are willing to join social events, such as singing karaoke and drinking with their employees, developing feelings of care for the others. By participating in the rituals, "bonds are strengthened, and the boss is less likely to dismiss the worker in difficult times" (Bell, 2010). Many employers own or rent vacation villas in the resort areas where employees can spend their holidays at low cost (Zandt, 1970). In turn, employees gain more confidence and make more contributions to their employer in a comfortable workplace. Employees voluntarily engage in self-cultivation and self-sacrifice in order to accept the authority of the superior. They are disciplined, "group-minded, and capable of pursuing the common good" (Hite & Hawes, 1991). Many Japanese enterprises are successful because they reject the notion that personal feelings have no place at work. Instead, they develop a feeling of trust and intimacy among their employees (Tai, 1989, p. 22).

Second, it should be noted that "One of the main forces behind Japan's rapid growth is its educational system" (Zandt, 1970). Education is highly valued, which enables the government to recruit well-qualified personnel for public services. In the post-war era, one of the major aspects of the transition was to develop moral education based on democracy. In this new system of education, the independent spirit was encouraged to build the peaceful state and society (Stowell, 2003). The purpose of education is to help Japanese students develop an ideal personality (Chen and Chung, 1997) and enhance their knowledge and talents while strengthening the consciousness of the virtues of humanity, justice, loyalty and filial piety (Takahashi, 1988). In 1958, the Japanese Ministry of Education introduced a new curriculum which "contained no

references to prewar lessons such as loyalty or etiquette" (Stowell, 2003). In China, the Chinese education system is required to hold Marxism as its theoretical guidelines and the "Five loves" (love the motherland and love the people, love labor, love science and love socialism") as the basic contents of education (Stowell, 2003). The Cultural Revolution destroyed the traditional Chinese culture and normal social relations by denouncing the "Four Olds" – old ideas, old culture, old customs, old habits (Chu, Hayashi, and Akuto, 1995). Chinese students are required to be loyal to the core leader of the CCP. Under the Xi administration, the CCP has established an informant system at universities which rewards student informants who secretly report their professors' political orientation to the authority. As a result, liberal professors are dismissed one after another, and freedom of speech, and independent thinking are prohibited at universities and schools. In 2019, The Communist Youth League announced a plan that will dispatch more than 10 million students to rural areas by 2022. This plan has raised fears of a return to Chairman Mao's brutal Cultural Revolution.

b. Japan Has Utilized Confucianism to Support Japanese Democracy

Some scholars suggest that the transition of Japan's democratization had nothing to do with Confucianism, but was a response to the threat of Western powers because Japanese people believed it was not only good for regional security but also good for their nation to turn Japan into a democracy. Without a doubt, the United States and its allies played a decisive role in the process of Japan's democratization, but Confucianism also helped to prepare for the transition and made the transition smooth. Meiji Scholars began to use Confucian conceptions, such as benevolence, justice, ritual, wisdom, trust, and *zhong yong* (the Doctrine of the Mean), to express the central principle of classic liberalism, train Meiji intellectuals, such as Fukuzawa Yukichi, Nishi Amane, and Tsuda Mamichi, shape the emergence of the Westernized modern social order, and bridge the gap between Confucian morality and democracy. Post-war Japan began the transition of demilitarization and democratization through reforming the Japanese economic, cultural and political systems under the occupation of the United States and its allies (Chow, 2012). Japan has run a democratic system since General MacArthur put a dem-

ocratic constitution in place during the U.S. occupation. However, the Japanese democratic system was not a typical democracy in the Western sense, but an incorporation run by an alliance of bureaucrats, political party officials and business leaders (Fukuyama, 1995). On the one hand, this unique democratic system has roots in the Japanese culture; on the other hand, it meets the needs of the Japanese people because it delivered high economic growth.

Japan's democratization is a successful combination of Japanese Confucianism and modern democracy and it is a dramatic example of cultural synthesis in the Japanese context (Kahn & Pepper, 1979, pp. 144–145). The democratic system helps Japan develop clean government and businesses. Japan has an almost total absence of nepotism which is one of characteristics that differentiates Japan from many other Asian nations (Zandt, 1970). The country of Japan is Japanese Inc. Loyalty is the spirit of Japanese Inc. However, unlike China, Japanese people are not required to be loyal to the political leaders of the nation, but they are loyal to the nation, the gods of their hearts, the boss of their workplace, and their parents (Bell, 2003). Although the government of Japan is a constitutional monarchy, according to the Japanese Constitution of 1946, the Japanese emperor is only “the symbol of the state and of the unity of the people.”

Unlike China, religion is not restricted in Japan. Confucius rejected discussion of “*tian*” (Heaven) and God, but one manifestation of Japanese loyalty shows in their religious belief. It is not true that “the Japanese people have no religion in contrast to foreigners who are Christians” (Kato & Hori, 1986). Japanese people practice religion daily and have converted religious belief into a social norm. Shintoism and Buddhism are the two major religions in Japan. Shintoism is an indigenous Japanese religion, and Buddhism comes from India through China. About 90% of Japanese people practice Shintoism. More than 20,000 Shinto shrines are available for the public to conduct ritual ceremonies. Some of them have become world heritage sites recognized by the United Nations. Many Shinto and Buddhist shrines are visible on streets, at restaurants and in shops. Japan also greatly embraces Christianity although only about 0.5% of Japanese people claim Christian belief. When the religious belief is extended to the entire society, Japanese people are loyal to their parents and leaders of workplace. This diverse practice of “loyalty” has significantly increased the consciousness of collectiveness and supported the Japanese democratic system.

c. Japan Has Utilized Confucianism to Develop its Harmonious Social Order

Historically, the Chinese and Koreans viewed Japanese people as barbarians. In fact, as early as the Muromachi period (1333–1568), Japan began to judge the civilization level of all other people and governments by using Confucianism as a basic standard. It was believed that “The more Confucianized they were, the more civilized they were considered to be. The less Confucianized they were, the more likely they were to be labeled ‘barbarians’” (Baker, 2016). Confucianized meant to follow China’s developmental model rather than to adopt Confucian principles. To be considered Confucianized and civilized, a country had to implement centralized government, value scholars over warriors, and prioritize Confucian ritual over other religions and schools of thought. Japanese Confucianism has played a significant role in developing Japanese civilization in the Meiji era leading toward to Japanese modernization.

The Confucian notion of *ren* (benevolence) has shaped Japanese social relationships (Tamai & Lee, 2001). *Ren* is a basic notion of Confucian texts, equivalent to the English word *love*. Like the Christian *Bible*, the word *ren* appears 109 times in the 11,705-word *Analects* – the Confucian Bible. In today’s Japan, *Ren* is not an empty word, but a popular practice. On the one hand, Japanese society provides an excellence service for individuals. The comprehensive system of social security was established during the post-war period, providing medical care and financial support for all. Japan will spend about 25% of GDP on its social welfare system by 2040. Japan has the highest life expectancy in the world, 90 years for women and 84 for men.

It is very convenient for everyone to live or travel in Japan. Hotel rooms are equipped with everything needed, including toothpaste, toothbrush, cotton swab, razor, hair dryer, air cleaning machine, TV, flashlight, umbrella, pajamas, and cellphone. Although technology is widely used in the Japanese management system, customers can still get real customer service at bus stops, subway and train stations, and information centers. The design of public facilities is very humanized. Most toilets in public spaces are electronic and multifunctional. All toilet seats and cushions in buses and subways are heated, which is especially good for children and elderly people during winter. Statistics shows Japanese bathroom culture and technology help to reduce the death rate and health issues.

On the other hand, Japanese individuals are very responsible for the society. Although the size of green space is limited due to a lack of flat land in Japan, the country is amazingly clean and the natural environment is well protected. It is very difficult to find trash cans on the streets, in tourist areas and other public places. Japanese people are used to carrying a small garbage bag when they go out and bringing their trash back to home as they see it as their responsibility to do so. In public, Japanese people show their politeness and respect. Nobody speaks loudly in hotels, restaurants, or coffee shops. It is Japanese practice to be quiet on the bus and train, in elevators, hotels, and theaters while those places are usually noisy in other nations, including China. Every driver follows the absolute principle of pedestrian priority. The politeness helps Japan decrease traffic accident rates. The average of traffic related death is about 17.4 per 100,000 people worldwide, but it is only 4.7 per 100,000 people in Japan, while it is 18.8 in China.

5. Conclusion

Confucianism persistently developed in pre-modern China and remains influential in the Republic of China. In the post-Mao era, the CCP has promoted state-sponsored Confucianism to serve its political agenda by implementing the key notion of Confucianism – loyalty (Tamney, 2012). This practice is on the wrong side of history because the CCP wants to use it to legitimize the one-party system. By contrast, Japan practiced Confucianism widely before the Meiji Revolution, and has reinterpreted Confucianism in the modern era especially after World War II. Japan has selectively practiced Confucianism in order to serve the capitalist market economy, support the democratic political system, and maintain the harmonious social order. Confucianism becomes Japanized Confucianism (Elman, Buncan, & Ooms, 2002). The practice of Confucianism in Japan is compatible with the trend of globalization, modernization and democratization.

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