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Confucianism and Reflexive Modernity: Toward a Second-modern Sociology

(儒家與反思現代性：走向第二現代社会学)

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Confucianism and Reflexive Modernity:
Toward a Second-Modern Sociology

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How can we properly understand the East Asian experience of modernization and pursue an open dialogue with the West toward a second-modern sociology? The key words of this presentation are Confucianism, reflexive modernity, and a second-modern sociology. By Confucianism I mean a post-Confucian development which is aware of the self-destructive consequences of modernization often referred to as global risk society. In this critical sense, post-Confucianism has something common to do with post-colonialism emphatically advocated by the sociology of the Global South (Mace, 2024). Nevertheless, I argue that the leading discourses in East Asia differ significantly from the leading discourses in the Global South. Post-Confucianism in East Asia represents a critical response to the unintended consequences of successful modernization while the mainstream discourse in the Global South reflects the failure in modernization (Han 2020:15). As a result, the post-Confucian development as I want to discuss in this paper is an attempt to move forward toward reflexive modernity and, hence, a second-modern sociology. in this sense, we may call this as a 'reflexive' Confucianism as 趙京蘭 (2020) introduces from the thought of Liang Shuming. In contrast, the post-colonial debates in the Global South are heavily inclined to reject the idea of modernity or modernization as an expression of the Western colonialism or imperialism.

No matter which connotations of 'post' may be preferred, an important point is that the basic direction of this paper is distinguished from the binary opposition underlying both 'Asian Value Debate' or the sociology of the Global South conventionally understood. With this goal, I will first 1) clarify the conventional meaning of post-colonialism and 2) introduces a comparative look at Japan and Korea from the mid-19th century, as a concrete case in which we can explore the meaning of post-colonialism. In the next section, 3) Yee Kwan Yew's version of Asian Value Debate will be critically discussed. Finally, an attempt will be made to show 4) the relations between post-Confucian development and reflexive modernity as well as a second-modern sociology

Conceptual Distinctions

The concepts of colonization, decolonization, and post-colonialism are closely interrelated. As Said's (1994) concept of "Orientalism" does, colonialism imposes rigid boundaries between the self and other, us and them, and normal and abnormal. Along with the presumption of binary opposition, colonialism entails the negative framing of the colonized ways of life, their customs, rituals, and traditions. The power of definition occupied by the colonizer imposes a dichotomy stigmatizing the colonized people as lacking civilization, like dirty, savaged, irresponsible, emotionally biased, and unreliable. This negative frame established by the colonizer penetrates into the subjectivity of the colonized by means of education, histories, and media communication as a stigma, insult, stereotype, and discrimination against the colonized.

As a reaction to this, decolonization means a colonial relation upside-down. It looks like a radical challenge to colonialism, but the same logic of binary opposition works from the roots. The epoch of decolonization is challenged by the oppositional mode of anti-colonialism. The colonial legacies are totally rejected to regain the suppressed values of national identity and culture. What was good in colonialism is now downgraded to bad in the time of decolonization. As Pieterse and Parekh (1995:11) observe,

> …a binary, dichotomizing approach predominates, contrasting colonial culture to national culture, cultural imperialism to cultural resistance. […] Decolonization is a process of emancipation through mirroring, a mix of defiance and mimesis. Like colonialism itself, it is deeply preoccupied with boundaries – boundaries of territory and identity, borders or nations and state.

In contrast, the post-colonial signifies an open-ended field of reflexive discourse or deliberation through which the taken-for-granted assumptions or boundaries are put into question.

> [T]he post-colonial world is more fluid, less rigid than the space of confrontation and re-conquest; boundaries, to those who have experience crossing them, become a matter of play rather than an obsession. The element of play opens possibilities for innovation beyond the logic of opposition-through-imitation. The post-colonial overlaps with other 'post' sensibilities. Thus, the response to orientalism is no longer 'orientalism-in-reverse' (denounce the Occident, embrace the Orient), nor Occidentalism (study the West like the West studies the East), but post-orientalism (Pieterse & Parekh, 1995:11).

Post-coloniality is distinguished from the logic of de-colonialization by a critical and

reflexive approach. Critical means that a post-colonial approach grasps the common background assumption behind two clearly diverging and confrontational surface views and criticizes the problem of this shared assumption. A good case in point is a feminist challenge. Both the colonial and de-colonial views of history, nation, state, and morality submerged into a patriarchal assumption of gender relations no matter how they are opposed to each other. This recognition has made post-colonialism liberated from the questionable logic of binary opposition. On the other hand, reflexive means an attempt to get away from a dogmatic and essentialist comprehension. Reflexive means that care is taken to assess fairly what we have gained and lost in historical change. Here the term of post implies a reflexive approach.

In the same way, when I talk about a post-Confucian development in this paper, I will take up a reflexive perspective which neither simply advocates Confucianism in the name of tradition nor reject it altogether because it is impedimental to modernity. Rather, it attempts to reconstruct it to release unexhausted cultural values with validity for further development. In this sense, I argue that there are commonalities between post-colonial perspective and post-Confucian development since both share a reflexive outlook. Nevertheless, they differ significantly because the former is largely reactive whereas the latter is proactive in their respective assessment of the paradigm of modernity. It is an open question whether, and, if so, how a proactive movement toward reflexive modernity as well as a second modernity can be inserted into post-colonial perspective. In the next section, I will show this possibility by looking into the relation of Japan and Korea as two neighborhood countries with a long history of interaction.

Japan and Korea in the context of Colonialism and post-Colonialism

Seizuburo Sato (1979), a Japanese political scientist, wrote an essay "Response to the West: The Korean and Japanese Patterns" to explain their sharp divergence due to this response. "Despite their geographical proximity and the shared historical, cultural, and social heritage that binds the two nations together, Korea responded to the encroachment of the West in a manner strikingly different from Japan" (Sato, 1979: 105-106). The result of these differences turned out to have wide ranging historical consequences for both nations. While "Japan was able to develop a more autonomous response to the encroachment of the Western powers" without "uprooting the traditional order" (ibid.: 129), Korea failed to join with the wave of modernization by stubbornly clinging to the policy of "isolation and the expulsion of foreigners"

(ibid.: 112).

Indeed, the different patterns of response to Western imperialism was consequential. In korea, the ruling class equipped with orthodox Neo-Confucianism regarded the Westerners as barbarians. They saw the world from a concentric model of China-centered civilization (*Zhonghuawenming*). But they also kept high pride on Chosen which they treated as representing a Chinese civilization smaller in scope but richer in essence. Thus, they completely rejected the demand of the Western emperialism to open the country.

In contreat, Japan decided to adjust to demand of Western powers while keeping its national identity. This enabled Japan to learn from Europe as much and fast as possible and build economic and technological infrastructure for industrial wealth and military strength. Thus Japan became the first modernizer in Asia. World-wide too, Japan became a successful late comer together with Germany. The strong bureaucratic-authoritarian state that Japan created via the Yushin reform of the 1860s worked efficiently to expedite economic growth and control politics and society under surveillence. Japan became an emperial power with the authority of emperor (*Tenno)* at the sumit of national pyramit and invaded neighborhood countries under the flag; 'saving Asia from Western imperialism.' Along this way, massive war crimes and human rights violations broke out and the all-out struggles against the Japanese colonialism continued in Asian countries.

It was in Korea where the suffering from colonialims was most severe and the struggle againast it also most fierce. Thus, the logic of binary opposition became deeply penetrated into the process of colonialization and the struggle against it. Choe Ikhyon (1809-1887), a well-known Confucian scholar at that time, for instance, defined the Western people as wild animals in his famous *Memorial against Peace*: "They have the face of human beings, but the mind of beasts; the slightest displeasure prompts murder, and the transgression of others' rights uninhibited" (Lee, 1996: 331). In his view, Japan was no longer a neighbor but "a guide for the Western bandits," as evidenced by the fact that contemporary Japanese "dress in Western clothes, use Western guns, and sail in Western ships" (ibid.: 333). He argued that "peace is possible with a neighbor, but impossible with an enemy bandit."

Yi Hangno (1819-1891), another exemplar of Confucian orthodoxy at the time, argued that "the calamity caused by the Western barbarians is more serious today than any caused by floodwater or wild beasts" and appealed to the King that "the choice between the life of a human or that of a beast, between survival or death, is to be made in a very short time" (Lee, 1996: 328). According to him, Korean people should "purify the heart and remain firm,

resisting the influence or temptation of things foreign" (ibid.: 328). Here, self-identity is confrontational based on binary oppostion. No compromise or moderation is possible in this worldview. In fact, Taewongun (1820-1898) launched a straightforward campaign of *wijung choksa* (defend orthodoxy and reject heterodoxy) by writing the following words in big letters on the pillar of a hall: "The ocean barbarians have invaded. Not to fight is to advocate peace. To advocate peace is to sell out the country" (ibid.: 307).

What is striking is the extraordinary intensity of the logic of binary opposition working through Confucian worldview in opposition to Western imperialism and Japanese drive of colonizing Korea. The binary opposition built into Japanese colonialism was no less intensive. It drew a sharp boundary between Japan and the lest Asian nations contrasting Japan as modern and civilized while others as premodern and savage. The self-image of Japan was getting out of Asia and merging into Europe. Japanese colonialism did not count Japan as part of Asia to which it gave a scornful look. It projected Japan as the protector of Asian people whom it treated not as respectable citizens but as the second class people.

In this context, decolonization meant returning to the logic of Confucian opposition to Japanese colonial agression. The dichotomy between offender and victim, between colonialism and nationalism, between war and peace, and between suppression and resistance became greatly reinforced and dominated over politics and everyday life. This means that the space is very limitted for partnership and mutual respect with equal dignity. This also means no space available for post-coloniality.

Nevertheless, another view comes into sight when we compare Japan and South Korea with respect to their responses to the the Western encroachment of information technology at the beginning of the 21st century. The information-technological revolusion can be seen as a new stage of cultural imperialism because it makes it possible for Western media conglomerates to exercise enormous power to saturate the cultural space of less-developed countries. Their power is so great that it can even breakdown the broadcasting and telecommunication companies of these countries. The cryptic aspect of cultural imperialism is found not only in the reproduction of fabricated images of less developed countries within the Western world, but also in the fact that these images are recycled in these countries too. One can also speak of "the specter of cultural homogenization" in the form of "Americanization" (Featherstone, 1990:10).

Compared with the past, however, the responses to the Western encroachment this time shows that Korean moved ahead of Japan and actively led innovations related to information

technology and knowledge society. Unlike Confucian intellectuals in the 19th century, Korean intellectuals of today have become remarkably Westernized, being in all likelihood more open-minded than their Japanese counterparts. The typical Korean is no longer as bounded by old-fashioned worldview as before but is driven to learn to get ahead of others. The Confucian emphasis on education worked well to motivate people to accept Internet as a means of communicdation and learn technical knowhow and softwares through schools and other programs. For instance, parents encouraged their children to learn how to use the Internet through private programs from a very early age. This means that a large pool of young Internet experts was formed from the bottom of the population pyramid.

Thus we can ask why things have changed in this dramatic way. The success story of the Korean IT revolution itself needs to be explained. It was already clear as of 2012 that the majority of the Korean population (84.1%) used the Internet according to Wolrd Bank and and 95% of households were high-speed broadband subscribers according to a report by international market research and market data firm Research and Markets. The fast growth of broadband and e-business in Korea can be explained by many factors related to demand, supply, and state policy. Here I am interested in the relations between the Korean Confucian self-identity and the efflorescence of Internet culture.

Different Interpretations of Confucianism

To deal with this issue, it is necessary to identify three different types of Confucianism in a preliminary way. For the sake of convenience, the discussion will be based on the developmental experience in Korea. But it can be easily extended to other countries. First, we have already seen a traditional type of Confucianism which was prevalent during the Joseon dynasty and failed to modernize the country. It comprehended neither the Western nor the Japanese imperial power correctly. Preoccupied with an old-fashioned worldview and ideology, it was unable to offer any reliable vision for the future. Given the painful experience of the collapse of the Joseon dynasty and the imposition of a Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945), there is no way of escaping from the view of Confucianism as an obstacle to modernization.

Before we move further, we need to make a short overview of the types and functions of Confucianism in East Asia, partticularly in China. Given various trajectories of Confucian schools, it is beyond my ability to look into their histories in detail to establish a firm bassis of my discussion of a post-Confucian develpment, as a central issue of this paper. But we can

assess where Confucianism stands today by way of some reserches already done by Confucian scholars. For instance, Chenyang Li (2012) teaching in the United States identifies some basic challenges to Confucianism. It failed in front of the Westen science and technology as well as democracy. It is highly anthropo-centric and thus pays not appropriate attention to environment and ecology. The feminist challenge also shows serious limitation of Confucianism. No one can deny such limits built into Confucianism. In China, Confucianism was flatly rejected as a serious structural obstacle to modernization and elightenment by the May Fourth Movement (1919) and many intellectuals following this historical wave after Shinhai revolution (1911). This turmoils also gave rise to many innovative attempts to reconcile Confucianism and democracy as in the case of Mou Zong-san (Elstein, 2011; Shi, 2015), particularly the works by de Bary (1983; 1991; 1998a) and his associates (de Bary & Kim Haboush, 1985; de Bary & Tu, 1998). At the same time, serious attempts have been made to develop an anthropo-cosmic vision of Confucianism (Tu, 2013; Manschot, 2014; Yuxin & Xuelai, 2016). Yet it is also true, as Li (2012: 68) observes, that "Confucianism still has a long way to go to advance itself as a flourishing philosophy in the 21st century."

Concerning the pluralities of Confucian studies today, Ding (2014) in the United States offers five trends focusing on their salient orientations: the studies based on what he calls ‚global contextualism,' ‚Asian modernism,' ‚Asian Americanism,' ‚new comparativism,' and classical textualism.' Most of Confucian scholars in East Asia may belong to the last category, meaning that they are preoccupied with hermeneutic interpreation of Confuxian texts. At the same time, we can notice the increasing number of research and writings addressed to a global significance of Confucianism (Berthrong, 1994; Garcia, 2015; Yang, 2015), the comparative research on Confucianism and American pragmatism (Hall & Ames, 1995; 1999; Kim, 2015; 2016) and inter-civilizational dialogue launched by Tu (1996; 1997; 2010).

Of particular interest in this regard is an attempt by Cheng-qui Li (2012) at NanjingUniversity in China to distinguish four different approaches to Confucianism today. The first is a conservative approach, the second is a Marxist one, the third is liberal, and the fourth is a reason-oriented approach. Clustered into the first conservative school are such Confucians with different orientations as Kang You-wei and Yan Fu who considered Confucianism as state religion; Liang Shu-ming and Xion Shi-li who wanted to reinvent Confucianism anew by returning to its Origin; Jiang Qing, Kang Xiao-guang, Sheng Hong, Zhang Xiang-long, Chen Ming, and Tu Weiming who are representative of conservative Confucian scholars today, according to Li. The second Marxist school includes Chen Du-xiu, Li Da-zhao, and Guo Mo-

ruo who approached Confucianism from the perspective of the founding members of the Chinese communist party; Zhang Dai-nian, Zhang Qi-zhi, Fang Ke-li, Li Wei-wu, and Li Hong-lei who applied a critical perspective of Marxism to assess the significance of Confucianism. The third liberal Confucianism takes a liberal perspective to examine whether the tenets of Confucianism are amenable with the principles of liberalism. Representatives of this approach include Zhang Jun-mai, Xu Fu-guan, Tang Jun-yi, Fang Dong-mei. Yuan Wei-shi, Liu Jun-ning, Xu You-yu, and Liu Ze-hua.

Finally, the last reason-oriented Confucianism takes an objective and fact-based pragmatic perspective to the value of Confucianism. Li suggests Tang Yi-jie, Meng Pei-yuan, Zhang Li-wen, Guo Qi-yong, Chen Lai, Li Cun-shan as maintaining this intellectual position. Tang Yi-jie at Peking University and Chen Lai at Tsinghua University in Beijing are well known as leading Confucian scholars. According to Li (2012: 38-39), Chen Lai insists that "if the anti-Confucianism trends during the 1920s were originated from cultural radicalism in the background of liberalism, the contemporary critical trends are rooted in dogmatism which is problematic because it ignores the issues related to the historical subjectivity of Chinese people, overlooks the difficulties involved in the historical transformation, and imposes a stigma of 'reactionism' to those who argue that we should try to understand Confucianism correctly. In this way, dogmatism buries various intellectual opinions."

Furthermore, the same author Li (2008) suggests five types of Confucianism with respect to its mode of functioning. The first is Confucianism from a religious perspective subdivided into three categories: Confucianism as ruling institution, Confucianism as academic discipline, and Confucianism as humanity religion. Kang You-wei, Tang, En-jia and Jiang Qing belong to Confucianism as ruling institution. Ren Ji-yu and Li Shen are identified with Confucianism as academic discipline, which means that they wanted to treat Confucianism as a cultural asset with its own historical function. Tang Jun-yi, Mou Zong-san and Liu Shu-xian are the representatives of the third category of humanity-oriented religion. Distinguished from these types of Confucianism as a religious paradigm, Confucianism can also be understood from a political perspective emphasizing the politics of virtue and people-based (*minben*) politics. Xu Fu-guan, Mou Zong-san and Jiang Qing represent this type of Confucianism. Another possibility is to understand Confucianism from a philosophical perspective, as exemplified by Feng You-lan who defends Reason-oriented new Confucianism; He Lin who sees Confucianism based on the principle of Ren; Xiong Shi-li and Mou Zong-san who articulates

a vision of moral metaphysics, and Tu Weiming and Cheng Zhong-ying who pursues modernization of Confucianism. We can still identify Confucianism from an ethical perspective as shown by Liang Shu-ming: Tang Jun-yi and Chen lai and Confucianism from a life perspective represented by Yu Ying-shi and Gong Peng-cheng.

The adequacy of the classification systems above may be debatable to the experts of Confucianism. But we need not to be too much concerned with the complexities and diversities involved in historical trajectories of Confucianism. What is important for our discussion is to clarify where we start in our inquiry into the relation between Confucianism and reflexive modernity. The key point then is to see the role of Confucianism in the process of modernization. This serves as the starting point for a sociological analysis. We then come up with the idea of Confucian capitalism, a topic extensively discussed based on the experiences in Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and China. Here we find a modern type of authoritarian Confucianism as an intrinsic condition for the economic process of modernization in East Asia. In other words, we find an immersion of Confucianism into the paradigmatic imperative of capitalist development to the extent to which we can ask whether Confucianism has provided a functional equivalent to what Protestantism did for the occidental capitalist development. Lee Guan Yew (Singarpore) and Park Jung Hee (South Korea) represented this type of Confucianism when they justified an Asian pathway of modernization while attacking the Western values of democracy and human rights.

It is from this backdrop that this paper explores a post-Confucian development which significantly differs from the authoritarian type of Confucian capitalism just briefly outlined. I am aware of the various schools and interpretations of Confucianism relevant theoretically and practically today. But we start from the claim that that a post-Confucian orientation is reflexive and distinguished not only from the traditional types of Confucianism preoccupied with the question of orthodoxy, but also from the modern type of a functionalized authoritarian Confucianism in support for Confucian capitalism. In contrast to these, post-Confucian development has something special to do with a vibrant civil society and discursive politics.

As an example, I will draw attention to the beginning of a post-Confucian movement of political public sphere by the Citizens' Alliance that wielded a strong influence in the general elections in April 2000 in Korea. Composed of about 600 individual NGO groups, the Alliance published a 'blacklist' of 86 candidates whom they concluded were unfit to run for the National Assembly. This was followed up by aggressive campaigns through the Internet. The Alliance

collected all the information of candidates' military service, tax payments, criminal records, and other public records and disclosed the hitherto unknown facts through the Internet. These campaigns were so successful that 59 of 86 candidates lost, including several political heavyweights. The success of campaigns of this type owes a great deal to the student movement in Korea during the 1980's, in the sense that these student movements produced many activists cum professionals prominent within civil society and capable of leading such campaigns at the time. Moreover, many of these former student movement activists have moved into influential positions within the IT industry.

Yet more interesting is the close affinity between these campaigns and the Confucian tradition of the public sphere during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Joseon Korea. As a reform-oriented social force, *sonbi* or *sarim,* was formed in the 16th century after several decades of nationally inspired Confucian education. Similarly, a new social force with a reform orientation which I have called *Joongmin* (中民) or public citizen -- a distinctive progressive segment of the middle class -- have emerged in Korea after several decades of student activism since the 1960s (Han, 1997).

According to a survey conducted in 1999,[1] which was designed to evaluate the usefulness of Confucian ethics including various components, the citizens who regarded the idea of *minbon* (民本 - which advocates politics based on people's initiatives and welfare) to be amenable to providing the means of the revival of Korea in the twenty-first century occupied as many as 97.6% of the respondents. In striking contrast to this, the negative responses were elicited to the continued preferential treatment of the eldest son as a backbone of Confucian social organization. Only 16.0% of respondents considered this principle to be useful for the future of Korea.

This indicates that this particular segment of the middle class with the identity of *Joongmin* or public citizen are clearly in favor of those currents within Confucianism that are of universal significance and are mutually compatible with democracy and human rights, whilst rejecting those currents that are in support of authoritarian and hierarchical relationships among social groups. Furthermore, despite many striking differences between past and present, we can note

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[1] The data have been collected from the students who took my sociology classes at Seoul National University from 1981 to 1989. Each semester I gave the students an assignment of an autobiographical study of a particular conflict in the transition from the stage of conventional morality to that of a post-conventional one. More than two thousand reports were collected. Of these, about 1,200 former students were subsequently identified in terms of where they reside or work. An intensive questionnaire was sent to them, together with a copy of their reports written in the 1980s. The return rate was slightly mover than 50 % since about 650 returned the questionnaire.

some interesting continuities and parallels between the Confucian *sonbi* or *sarim* of the past and NGO activists in today's Korea. Firstly, they were both highly critical of corruption and injustice built into the ruling establishment; they were activists, so to speak, committing themselves to a normative ideal of good governance and acting on behalf of ordinary people; secondly they both shared a strong sense of devotion to public interests rather than their own private interests; and finally, both groups enjoyed moral respect whilst acting according to their values in a straightforward way.

Based on this observation and reasoning, I want to advance a thesis that the future of Confucianism and its role in East Asia will diverge significantly from the authoritarian trajectories. Because we are now living in the age of global risk society, it is likely that more emphasis will be placed on humanity-enriching traditions within Confucianism that are, by nature, participatory and deliberative. Of course the revitalization of Confucian traditions will be greatly affected by such sociological conditions as democratization, the role of the middle class, civil society and so on. Seen in this way, Confucianism, as a living tradition, may acquire new historical meaning only when it is reconstructed as a discursive paradigm of society and politics with heightened sensitivity to individual human development.

Where does East Asia stand?

The impact of globalization needs to be scrutinized since a simple dichotomy between center and periphery no longer fits. Giddens (1990: 64) defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide relations which link distinct localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events many miles away, and vice versa." Globalization is by no means a unitary process, but must be seen "as a complex set of changes with mixed and quite often contradictory outcomes" (Giddens, 1994:81). Globalization disperses Western values into non-Western worlds by means of such technological innovations as digital communication, while, at the same time, facilitating the renewal of local traditions and identities.

What is the relation between globalization and imperialism? Wallerstein (1984:169), for example, defines globalization as "a capitalist mode of production [spreading] to incorporate all areas of the globe within its economic boundaries." The capitalist world-economy pursues "the logic of its ceaseless accumulation of capital so unremittingly that it [is] approaching its theoretical ideal, the commodification of everything" (Wallerstein, 1995: 266). Consequently,

globalization gives rise to the hegemony of such actors as transnational banks and corporations, who make "their investment decisions in the light of comparing relevant production conditions on a global scale" (Habermas, 1998: 134). In view of the growing gap between the internationalization of financial, capital and labor markets, on the one hand, and the absence of transnational political actors capable of countering this on the other, one can conclude that globalization tends to produce and sharpen contradictions on a worldwide scale, while enlarging disparities among social groups, sectors and nations.

To be sure, the worldwide domination of Western culture, particularly digital media industries will continue, together with the efficacy of Western science and technology. The American media conglomerates seem powerful enough to breakdown the broadcasting and telecommunication companies of less-developed countries and saturate the defenseless cultural space of these nations. Therefore, the rest of the world has reason to fear "the spectre of cultural homogenization" often expressed in the form of "Americanization" (Featherstone, 1990:10). The cryptic aspect of cultural colonialism is found not only in the reproduction of fabricated images of less developed countries within the Western world, but also in the fact that these images are recycled in these countries too.

These stereotypes, however, tend to meet serious challenges once their selective function as well as distorting effects are disclosed. This may give rise to the struggle for recognition (Taylor, 1992). Since globalization fosters the domestic and transnational process of polarization, those at bottom of this stratified global system are likely to show radical responses, such as racial and ethnic violence. The sense of deprivation tends to be channeled into aggressive populist feelings against ethnic minorities or immigrants, as we find it today even in the Western countries. This is indeed far from Fukuyama's (1989: 2) claim of "the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government."

Given the complexity and ambiguities involved in globalization, the evolutionary scope of variation may depend on the position that each country occupies within the systems of international stratification. We should note the dynamic vitality of East Asia. Contrary to past imperialism, Giddens emphasizes that globalization today offers immense new opportunities and huge risks at the same time. In these situations, we are led to ask whether the conventional assumption of binary opposition, together with the cold war mentality, is indeed suitable for understanding the dynamism involved in East Asian development. An important point is that a binary opposition of cultures tends to reproduce the underlying logic of the colonial project. The logic of indigenization involves "the essentialization of difference," that is, "this logic is

similar to that of colonial racism, except that the other has become the self and the values are reversed" (Pieterse & Parekh, 1995: 9). Our task is how to go beyond this by way of post-colonial or post-Confucian discourse.

Lee Kuan Yew's Confucian Project

Lee Kuan Yew's discourse reflects his own interpretation of East Asian development. As with many others, he seems confident of the economic achievements of East Asia and its future. The process of modernization that took the West two hundred years or more to reach its current position, has taken place in East Asia within just one or two generations. As Lee (Zakaria, 1994: 226) notes, this process has been "all crammed and crushed into a very tight time frame." One reason for this speedy development may lie in the latecomer's advantage. As described by Lee: "We knew where we were, and we knew where we had to go. If we did not have the good points of the West to guide us, we wouldn't have got out of our backwardness" (ibid.: 232). What is most notable in Lee's argument, however, is his contention that Confucianism has played a decisive role in this development. Distinguishing himself from the typical institutional explanation of Asian development, Lee (ibid.: 224) is quick to point out the role of such Confucian attributes as "belief in thrift, hard work, filial piety and loyalty in the extended family, and, most of all, the respect for scholarship and learning." Without this cultural backdrop, Lee speculates that development would have been much slower (ibid.: 225).

In his assessment, however, Lee is critical of the application of the Western or American model of democracy to East Asia. The philosophical reason he gives is that the basic principle of social organization in East Asia differs fundamentally from that of Western societies. This has something to do with the contrast between individualism and communitarianism, a dichotomy that he endorses. Moreover, an important sociological reason is that Western development has resulted in enormous pathological side effects because of too much democracy and too many individuals' rights, resulting in the destabilization of social order. Lee (ibid.: 221) argues that "the expansion of the right of an individual to behave or misbehave as he pleases has come at the expense of orderly society." To take an example, the problems of America - such as drugs, guns, and violent crime - are for Lee closely related to the erosion of the moral foundations of society and the diminution of personal responsibility. The liberal argument that all would be better off if they were allowed to do their own thing is therefore

dubious for him.

These considerations have led Lee Kuan Yew to defend an Asian alternative whose "object is to have a well-ordered society" (ibid.: 221). He argues that one can only enjoy his freedom when there is an ordered state, not a "natural state of contention and anarchy." Lee accepts modernization - in the form of science and technology - but rejects Westernization. He is, of course, well aware of the uncertainty involved in the future of Asia. "We have left the past behind and there is an underlying unease that there will be nothing left of us which is part of the old" (ibid.: 226). Where do we need to go next? Needless to say, the question of Asian values and identity is of decisive importance in this respect. He thus declares:

> No matter if [the question of human rights] is in a golden age or a period of chaos, Asian society never puts the individual values above the societal values. Societies are always more important than individuals. I think that this value will save Asia from the greatest calamities (Lee, 1993: 502).

Lee's conclusion comes close to the binary opposition between colonialism and anti-colonialism. Lee (Zakaria, 1994: 220) argues that it is wrong to foist the Western value system "indiscriminately on societies in which it will not work." Lee accepts the universal validity of science and technology, but not Western liberal democracy and human rights. In his view, no society "is able to cast aside its basic way of doing things, and go and adopt a completely new style" (Lee, 1993: 581). This argument is based on the assumption that Confucianism has shaped civilizations that are fundamentally different from Western ones. He even contends that "every man over the age of 40 who has a family" should be given two votes rather than one "because he is likely to be more careful, voting for his children" (Zakaria, 1994: 227). By the same token, Lee advocates a Confucian version of civil society in which the family is made "the building brick of society" (ibid.: 222).

Though Lee's discourse is carefully couched, often decisive and also sophisticated, it is not difficult to discern its close tie with Huntington's thesis of a "clash of civilizations." According to Huntington (1993: 91), East Asians have now acquired "wealth, technology, skills, machines and weapons" as part of being modern. Based on this economic and military strength, East Asians now "attempt to reconcile this modernity with their traditional culture and values." Nevertheless, Lee distinguishes himself from Huntington by his rejection of Western cultural imperialism and by his insistence that East Asians should break away from the Western paradigm of liberalism and individualism.

Critical Evaluation

Having presented Lee's Confucian self-identity as an alternative to the Western liberal one, I would now like to demonstrate why this project is problematic in three steps. Firstly, the binary opposition between the East and the West advocated by Lee renders the hermeneutic fusion of horizons and boundary-crossings almost impossible and hence the argument appears flawed from the outset. Locating Confucianism and democracy at opposite ends of the spectrum resembles nothing more than "the Cold War structures of East/West relations"(Callahan, 1996: 118, 125). Note the following statement by Huntington:

> At the most basic level, however, Western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures. Western efforts to propagate such ideas produce instead a reaction against "human rights imperialism" and a reaffirmation of indigenous values, as can be seen in the support for religious fundamentalism by the younger generation in non-Western cultures. The very notion that there could be a "universal civilization" is a Western idea, directly at odds with the particularism of most Asian societies and their emphasis on what distinguishes one people from another (1993: 83-84).

However, his view is incorrect, since not only Western but all world religions have been founded upon a belief in human dignity as well as the commitment to such universal values as peace, justice and human development. This has been well demonstrated by Tu Weiming (1985; 1993; 2010; 2013; also refer to the appendix of this book). This is not to deny the difference between individualism and collectivism. This distinction, however, should not prevent us from seeing the common values of world religions, cultures, and traditions. In this respect, the clash of civilizations thesis seems to convey meanings more inclined towards political considerations than of cultural interpretations. In opposition to this there can be good reasons to defend an intercultural dialogue aiming at creating and sustaining mutual understanding.[2]

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[2] An exemplary critique of Lee Kwan-Yu's conservative Confucian project, is given by Kim Dae-Jung (1994), who argues that the major obstacle to establishing democracy in Asia is not its cultural heritage but resistance of authoritarian rulers and their apologists. He goes on to assert that there is little difference between East and West in terms of the availability of the fundamental ideas and traditions required for democracy. Long before Locke, Mencius formulated the idea of *Minben zhengchi* (people-based politics) as well as popular revolution. Nevertheless, authoritarian leaders have long maintained that cultural differences make 'Western concepts' of democracy and human rights inapplicable to East Asia. This is erroneous, according to Kim (1994: 235), since Asia has as rich a "heritage of democracy-oriented philosophies and traditions" as any

Secondly, Lee's Confucian project may go well with state-led authoritarian development, but probably not so well with global communication. In the age of global communication, traditions can never simply be taken for granted but persist only "in so far as they are made available to discursive justification and are prepared to enter into open dialogue not only with other traditions but with alternative modes of doing things" (Giddens, 1995: 105). This may give rise to what Anthony Giddens (ibid.: 96) calls the "post-traditional society" as "the first global society."

> A post-traditional society is not a national society－we are speaking here of a global cosmopolitan order. Nor is it a society in which traditions cease to exist; in many respects there are impulses, or pressures, towards the sustaining or the recovery of traditions. It is a society, however, in which tradition changes its status. In the context of a globalizing, cosmopolitan order, traditions are constantly brought into contact with one another and forced to 'declare themselves' (ibid.: 83).

Confucianism can never exempt itself from this imperative to engage in active inter-cultural dialogue. Lee's conservative project faces imminent difficulties particularly when younger generations and women ask why they should accept as valid the authoritarian and hierarchical relations of power built into Confucianism.

Thirdly and most importantly, Lee's argument is questionable since he speaks only of the success of East Asian development but remains silent regarding its structural deficiencies. He appears ready to support what can be called Confucian capitalism, Confucian civil society or Confucian democracy as an alternative to over-taxed and potentially dangerous Western systems. This only mirrors the legacy of binary opposition. Instead, we need to develop an intellectual joint venture sensitively addressed to the common task of understanding and overcoming the limits of modernization as experienced by East and West alike. Unfortunately, Lee's discourse lacks this reflexive dimension of learning.

Post-Confucian Development and Vibrant Civil Society

When we explore the meaning of Asian identity in the 21st century, a post-traditional approach to Confucianism is meaningful because it sensitizes our attention not simply to the all too obvious role of the Confucian mainstream in justifying and rationalizing the authoritarian

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Western society.

relationships of power in history, but to the exact opposite of this, that is, how Confucianism has served as the basis for criticizing authoritarian regimes deviating from Confucian norms. Insofar as the latter is not accidental but intrinsic, (no matter how marginal it may have been in actual history), there are good reasons to pay attention to this within the framework of a deconstructive and reconstructive subversive genealogy. In Korea and China, for example, engaged criticism of unjust rulers mostly came from:

> . . . the ranks of orthodox Neo-Confucians－not from among Buddhists or Taoists. The latter were, as we say, out of it, not engaged in the kind of struggle religion waged against Caesar in the West. In this respect Confucianism－not a teaching usually considered "Religious" - performed the critical function Max Weber assigned to religion as the effective bearer of compelling, transcendental values in vital tension with the world, while Buddhism and Taoism, normally considered "religions," barely did do (de Bary, 1991: 58).

Why is this so? A plausible interpretation is that the long-standing tension between Confucian ideal and empirical (often autocratic) reality stems from the relationship between "heaven" (天: *t'ien/ch'ŏn*) and the "people" (民: *min*). In the *Analects*, for example, we find various expressions designating the people, such as "the masses" (衆: *chung*), "the hundred names" (百姓: *paek sŏng*), and the many (庶人: *sŏ in*). While each of these has specific connotations, *min* indicates "the common people as an undiscriminated mass" (Hall and Ames 1987: 142). Thus:

> . . . *t'ien* and *min* overlaps in representing available fields of possibilities. Just as *t'ien* can be construed as the indeterminate field in which the myriad things, including the human being himself, articulate themselves and grow, so the *min* can be regarded as that field of possibilities from which the particular person emerges as a cultured human being (ibid., 145).

Furthermore, the Confucian canon presupposes a peculiar association between this concept of "*min*" and "*t'ien/ch'ŏn*." Mencius states that *t'ien* sees as the people see; *t'ien* hears as they hear (Mencius 36/5A/5). The *Book of Documents* informs us that "*t'ien* has compassion for the people; whatever they desire, *t'ien* is sure to effect." It also formulates the image of people-based politics as follows: "The people ought to be cherished, not oppressed, for it is only the people who are the root of the state, and where this root is firm, the state will be stable" (Legge, 1960: 158).

Seen from this perspective, there can be no mandate from Heaven for any ruler who violates this basic life-giving principle since the people themselves represent the ultimate source of humanity. Thus one can justifiably argue that "the government exists only to advance and enhance those human values, and not to serve the interests of the ruler or ruling house" (de Bary, 1991: 61), and yet be placed within the wellspring of orthodox Confucian thought. The fundamental importance of the common people for Confucianism is based on the doctrines "that all life comes from Heaven, that all human beings are endowed with moral nature, and that in each individual lies the imperative to act in accordance with the principles inherent in that nature"(ibid.: 70). It is no accident therefore, that the Confucian with uncompromising spirit sees the existing state of politics as flawed and corrupt when evaluated through the lens of this normative criterion.

This analysis can be extended to cover the recent student movements in Korea (Han, 1997). No matter how they saw their actions subjectively, the students' protest against autocracy from the 1960s to the 1980s was, in fact, strongly supported by Confucian moral traditions in which intellectuals were seen as representing the voice of the people (*min*) which was, in turn, assumed inseparable from the will of Heaven. What is more, this tradition, though marginal in the Pan-Asian history of Confucianism, has a long history in Korea and has been expressed sometimes in radical forms of popular struggle when the nation was confronted with a grave crisis (Cho, 1997). This aspect of Confucianism can be reactivated as an asset for liberal and democratic institutions, leading to a critically reconstructed tradition that differs significantly from conventional readings of Confucianism.

The Korean trajectory of post-Confucian participatory development has been facilitated by the combination of such sociological factors as the steady advance of democratization, the increase of the middle class, the expanded role of civil society, and a vibrant online community.[3] It is in South Korea that we can best test the possibility of post-Confucian development towards reflexive modernity as well as a second-modern sociology within the context of global risk society.[4]

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[3] When I suggest this possibility, I do not intend to offer a clear-cut causal relationship between Confucian traditions and a particular pursuit of human rights (such as participation in the Gwangju uprising) in terms of either a cognitive belief system or membership in a Confucian community on the part of the participants. I only wish to suggest that a participatory communitarian approach to human rights seems to be plausible in Korea today and in the future as well, and that this possibility can be better understood within the Confucian *minben* traditions, which this paper has attempted to reactivate and radicalize.

[4] For this reason, I would like to advance a thesis that the Confucian future in Korea will differ significantly not only from the Chinese or Singaporean paths but also from Korea's own past as well. In the future, more emphasis will be placed on humanity enriching traditions within Confucianism that are, by nature, participatory and deliberative.

Zhong Yong (中庸) Revisited

The basic methodology for achieving a balance between individual and community lies in communicative rationality conceived of from the Confucian perspective of *Zhong Yong*. As a system of Confucian thought, *Zhong Yong* may be characterized by circles of homological reasoning (albeit in different forms and from different directions) over the relations of personal ethics, intersubjective moral relations, and metaphysical harmony with Heaven. Confucian learning is inwardly oriented in the sense that one is expected to cultivate his virtue ceaselessly. According to Confucian precepts, the gentleman is to be watchful over his inner conduct even when he is alone "because he cares not only about the consequences of his actions but also about the motivational structure behind it" (Tu, 1989: 20). Simultaneously, however, Confucian learning is addressed outwardly since one is expected to interact with others and develop a fiduciary community characterized by a high degree of mutual care and trust.

In this respect *Zhong Yong* (中庸) deserves special attention. The *Chung-yung* is significant in that it well explicates the Confucian golden rule, namely "Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you." This presupposes the existence of independent others who, in principle, are capable of pursuing their own interests and thus can do things independent of, or sometimes even against, my preferred way of life. The uncertainty thereby created invites the principle of reciprocity, and this theme runs throughout Confucianism as a whole.

An important question to be asked explicitly is how Confucianism would teach us to resolve the potential conflicts of interests that are likely to emerge given the plurality of actors. Here it is no longer useful to rely on the Confucian framework of the theory of mind (*shimhak*; 心學) searching for "an ever-deepening subjectivity" (Tu, 1989: 3). Instead, the perspective of communicative action is required. An excellent textual reference to the Confucian mode of conflict resolution and consensus formation is found in the *Chung-yung*:

> Confucius said, "Shun was indeed a man of great wisdom! He loved to question others and to examine their words, however ordinary. He concealed what was bad in them and displayed what was good. He took hold of their two extremes, took the mean between them, and applied it in his dealing with the people. This was how he became Shun" (the sage-emperor) (Chan, 1963: 99).

This passage reveals a Confucian vision of politics based on attentive communication. Of particular significance here is that this passage grasps the inter-subjective dimension of communication, a sphere that differs fundamentally from the subjective dimension of self-introspection. The process of decision-making is depicted here as the process of deliberative communication: it includes "two extremes," thus nothing can be arbitrarily excluded. At the same time, it must be deliberative so that the best option can be chosen and applied. Confucianism is distinctive by its emphasizes on the role of learning through attentive communication geared at self-reflection. The power of language is clearly recognized in the notion of "the ordering of names" or "the rectification of names" (*chngmyng*; 正名). The *Analects* (20/3) inform us that "one who does not understand language has no way of understanding others." In this sense, it is not an exaggeration when Hall and Ames (1987: 261) describe the "sage" as a "master communicator," although their claim that the Confucian mode of understanding is more "aesthetic" than "moral- cognitive" is debatable (ibid.: 268). Etymologically, the Chinese term 'sage' is closely related to 'learning' in that the sage is characterized as having large and pendant ears, which emphasises that "hearing has a central role in Confucius' project of self-cultivation" (ibid.: 258).

An interesting question is how to arrive at the golden mean so emphatically held up as a standard by the *Chung-yung*. Two conditions need to be considered. The first subjective condition lies in an outstanding quality of "keeping balance" or "moderation" which keeps under control all the manifestations toward extreme polarization while attempting to construct and sustain a viable center within subjectivity. The *Book of Documents* demonstrates how important and difficult it is to attain and preserve the middling soul:

> The mind of man is restless, - prone to err; its affinity for the right way is small. Be discriminating, be undivided, that you may sincerely hold fast the Mean. Do not listen to unsubstantiated words; do not follow undeliberated plans. Of all who are to be loved, is not the sovereign the chief? Of all who are to be feared, are not the people the chief? If the multitude were without sovereign, whom should they sustain aloft? If the sovereign had not the multitude, there would be none to guard the country for them (Legge, 1960: 62).

The objective condition for arriving at the golden mean can be explicated within the theory of public sphere. Though limited in terms of participants, Confucian public sphere was institutionalized in China and Korea, both inside and outside the dynastic regimes; inside by

censors acting to check imperial misrule, and outside by Confucian intellectuals remonstrating against the corruption and abuses of the ruling elite. At the same time, numerous debates amongst Confucian scholars brought attention to the fundamental importance of public discourse for good governance. In the end, the rationality of Confucian governance lies in the possibility of arriving at a consensus through affective communication. Confucianism as a system of governance and as a political philosophy presupposes a communication theory of affective consensus. However, the precise link between Confucianism and the affective rationality it implies still needs to be investigated.

Toward a Second-modern Sociology

In conclusion, the ultimate goal of the post-Confucian participatory development is to explore the possibility of 'unconstrained overlapping consensus' among "different groups, countries, religious communities, civilizations, while holding fundamentally incompatible views on theology, metaphysics, human nature, and so on" (Taylor, 1999: 124). The simple dichotomy between East and West must be seen as problematic.

Guided by this perspective, this paper shows how Confucianism can be transformed from an authoritarian type to a more democratic and participatory type via deconstructive - reconstructive methodology. This approach aims to increase our reflexive understanding of the unintended consequences of our actions - that is, the risks and dangers produced by risk society as a product of East Asian development.[5] The dominance of instrumental rationality has made both human relations and the relationship between nature and humans ever more destructive. Consequently, it has become more likely for people to view each other not as members of a moral community as inspired by Confucianism, but rather as objects to be exploited and maneuvered. The ultimate goal of this transformation is to go beyond anthropocentrism towards reflexive modernity and the possibility of a second-modern sociology. This requires

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[5] This reflexivity is expressed in various social movements that have rapidly emerged throughout East Asia, nurturing and spreading post-conventional values. Reflexive modernization has to do with institutionalizing these values (Han 1997). Of particular significance in this regard is free access to information by all, and democratization of the decision making processes in organizations (see Heckscher and Donnellon 1994). Monopoly, segmentation, and distortion of information commonly found in bureaucratic systems hinder the development of the creative potential of their members. It is also necessary that the exercise of authority be based on neither traditional status, nor bureaucratic titles, but based on mutual agreement amongst the members of an organization. Neither a traditionalist nor bureaucratic mode of legitimization, nor the rationality of market-oriented calculation alone is sufficient for reflexive modernization. Rather, we should ground reflexive modernization upon those aspects of normative cultural potential that leads us to a more comprehensive and deliberative rationality.

an "anthropocosmic" global ethic embracing "the harmony between human species and nature (Tu 1997: 24-25). "Conscious of the interrelatedness of all things, and of one's own place in an interdependent world," Confucianism can help us develop "a sense of equal responsibility for oneself and others and of reciprocal support for a life-sustaining environment" (de Bary, 1988a: 127). This is probably what is meant by the Confucian maxim *Xiushen qijia zhiguo pingtianxia* (修身齊家治國平天下). The concept of peace under heaven may refer to peaceful living and existence for all things under heaven - not simply humans, but ecosystems as well.

We need to broaden the scope of the Enlightenment project rather than discarding it altogether by "deepen[ing] its moral sensibility, and, if necessary, creatively transform[ing] its genetic constraints in order to fully realize its potential as a world-view for the human community as a whole."

Here we can find profound resonance among post-Confucian development, reflexive modernity, and the the possibility of a second-modern sociology.

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논어와 사회학: 좋은 거버넌스란 과연 무엇인가?

Analects of Confucius and Sociology: What does Good Governance mean Today?

(論語與社會學: 論當今善治之意涵)

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Analects of Confucius and Sociology：

What Does Good Governance Mean Today? [1]

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1 Introduction

1.1 Three Worlds in Natsume Sōseki's Novel

In Natsume Sōseki's novel "Sanshiro" (published in 1908), the concept of "Three Worlds" is introduced, embodying his fundamental perspective on the social transformation of Japan during the late Meiji period. The first world represents the traditional society, imbued with warmth yet irretrievable. Its imagery encompasses the hometown that one cannot frequently revisit after moving to the city for study or work, as well as the mother who remains in the hometown, often missing and being missed by the wandering son.

The second world refers to the immediate workspace. It is symbolized by the daily commute on crowded buses, where despite the seemingly regular schedule every day, there lies an inescapable sense of busyness and helplessness. The workspace serves as a crucial arena for life planning and the pursuit of life's meaning, yet it is also a highly controlling political and economic system.

The third world represents the modern metropolis. The modern city is a prosperous and developed realm that simultaneously feels restrictive, a new world where everyone

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can enter but struggle to fully integrate. In describing the third world, Natsume Sōseki writes: "The third world sparkles dazzlingly, like the rippling spring sunlight. There are electric lights, silver spoons, laughter, joy, bubbling champagne, and beautiful women who are the crowning glory of all creatures... This world lies before us, yet it is difficult to approach... Nevertheless, this world that ought to prosper and flourish instead shackles our hands and feet, blocking the paths of our free entry and exit." (Sanshiro, p.69)

The imagery of the third world mentioned by Natsume Sōseki implies that modern Japan, having emerged from a poor and hierarchical traditional period, has not fully entered the idealized world promised by the Meiji Restoration. Furthermore, in the novel, Natsume Sōseki states: "We are young people who cannot bear the old Japanese oppression; at the same time, we are also young people who cannot bear the new western oppression." (Sanshiro, p.122) Over a century ago, in Japanese society, Natsume Sōseki conveyed through the concept of "western oppression" a paradox of modernity: humanity has entered the modern world yet fails to experience the ideal life promised by modernity theories.

Following the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment, Europeans were the first to embark on the path of modernity, leading to an almost irreversible journey of modernization for countries worldwide, with their traditional structures disrupted to varying degrees. On one hand, a modern world characterized by intellectual liberation, technological advancement, material abundance, and greater freedom, equality, democracy, and diversity is taking shape. On the other hand, modernity has also brought about its own set of challenges. Despite the material prosperity of the modern world, human happiness has not commensurately increased. While individual behaviors become increasingly rational, the modern society as a whole seems to be losing its rationality, leading people to feel that the modern world is not as utopian as envisioned by the Enlightenment thinkers.

1.2 Risk Society and East Asian Perspective

German sociologist Ulrich Beck characterized modern society as a risk society. This concept serves as a critical overall diagnosis of modernity, implying that the modern society we inhabit is still far from being healthy and mature. In developed European and American countries, we observe advancements in economic technology and comprehensive social security, yet also witness a state of high individualization and fragmentation among social groups. Under conditions of high individualization, individuals attach great importance to their rights, sometimes overly sensitive in protecting themselves, leading to the transformation of interpersonal boundaries into

feelings of alienation and loneliness. In extreme cases, this highly individualized modern society may evolve into a "Leviathan" where "all are against all." Fragmentation among groups results in social rifts and political confrontations, particularly in gender and racial issues that have escalated to extreme or even pathological levels. Even the United States, which champions freedom of speech, is increasingly moving towards its opposite due to group fragmentation and politicization.

In East Asia, China, Japan, and South Korea face formidable challenges to sustainable economic and social development posed by aging populations and declining birth rates. Changes in socio-political conditions and youth values are also noteworthy.

South Korea. South Korea's pronounced wealth gap and class solidification have garnered significant attention. While some middle-class individuals have degenerated into selfish rentier classes, the grassroots populace has embraced populism. The middle class, adhering to neoliberalism, relies on political strongmen to safeguard their vested interests and class status, while populists engage in relatively moderate protests such as candlelight rallies (HAN Sang-Jin, 2024). Populism in South Korea is not an isolated case but a global trend, reflecting the discontent of the grassroots worldwide towards wealth disparities and class solidification. Faced with myriad problems in modern Korean society, a considerable proportion of young Koreans feel disillusioned or even despairing, adopting consumerism and hedonism as life attitudes. The concept of 'N-Throwaways Generation' (N 포세대) best reflects the disillusionment and its intensification among Korean youth, evolving from initial 'three throwaways' (throwaway romance, marriage, and childbirth) to later 'five throwaways' (further throwaway property and interpersonal relationships) and 'seven throwaways' (further throwaway dreams and hopes).

Japan. Due to factors like prolonged economic stagnation, widening income inequality, conservative political systems, and tense geopolitical relations, political expression in Japan has become increasingly radical. The 2022 assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister ABE Shinzo on the street is a typical case of extreme political expression. The mental state of Japanese youth is also alarming. Some are labeled as 'NEETs' (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), living parasitically with their parents, while others are called 'Otaku'(お宅), socially withdrawn and suffering from varying degrees of psychological issues. Ohmae Kenichi, a Japanese economist, characterizes the lethargic Japanese society as a 'low-desire society' as an increasing number of Japanese opt for 'not buying a house, not owning a car, not getting married, not having children, and not working'. Japanese media uses the term 'society without social ties'(無縁社会) to describe a highly individualized and loosely connected Japanese society, encompassing not only elderly people living alone at risk of 'lonely

deaths'（孤独死）but also young people living alone, increasingly dissatisfied with their life.

China. In the last decade, China's political centralization has significantly intensified. The central government's control over local governments has become more meticulous, the Communist Party of China's management of cadres stricter, and the government's control over economic and social affairs broader and more forceful. The state's control over rural grassroots societies has reached a historical peak. The 'one-shoulder-carrying' system of village secretaries and directors (书记主任一肩挑) reinforces the township governments' power over personnel appointments in village committees, indirectly negating the historical practice of village democratic elections. County and township governments directly manage village collective assets and economies through 'rural prosperity company' (强村公司, most notably in Zhejiang Province). As China's wealth gap widens and class solidification emerges, some Chinese youth who have lost their dreams have reluctantly chosen to 'lie flat'(躺平), becoming 'daily wage laborers'(日结工). Working one day and resting (or entertaining) for two, their lifestyles are quite decadent, earning them the nickname 'Sanhe God' (三和大神, as a group of such young people gather at the Sanhe Job Market in Shenzhen to seek daily wage work). Meanwhile, some Chinese youth join the fiercely competitive ranks striving for upward mobility, but the difficulty of achieving class ascension is considerable. Many Chinese youth find themselves in an awkward situation where 'they want to lie flat but can't, and want to compete but can't', with the coexistence of lying flat and intense competition(躺平与内卷) forming a unique landscape of China's 'anxious society' (Wang Tianfu, 2023).

As representatives of compressed modernization, China, Japan, and South Korea share some similar paradoxes. From a political-social perspective, state power and technocratic authority have strengthened, while the wealth gap has widened, class solidification has emerged, and populism has risen. In terms of youth's living conditions, there are both the anxieties and intense competition of meritocracy and the pessimism and lying flat stemming from the hopelessness of upward mobility. Lying flat and intense competition are two sides of the same coin, both reflecting the helplessness faced by individuals under the institutional control of an unavoidable vast system. This distorted value system and living situation among contemporary youth reveal the limitations of modern society. Perhaps this is the 'sorrow of progress', where both progress and sorrow originate from the matrix of modern society. The 'sorrow of progress' inspires us to thoroughly reflect on modernity theories.

1.3 Critique and Reflection on Modernity

Classical sociologists have mounted robust critiques to modernity. Max Weber posits that the worldwide modernization exhibits a universal trend towards rationalization, yet excessive rationalization will become a cage that constrains the human spirit. Karl Marx offers highly critical theoretical explanations of capital, labor, surplus value, and class issues, outlining practical schemes for the communist revolution. Durkheim observes the phenomenon of suicide in modern society and identifies the underlying issue of social anomie; while organic solidarity grants greater freedom, it exacerbates social anomie and moral imbalance.

With the rise and systematization of capitalism, various forms of institutional authoritarianism and systemic hegemony have emerged, benefitting and burdening modern individuals simultaneously. Habermas argues that the lifeworld of modern society has been colonized by systems, and interpersonal communication is increasingly constrained by commodified and bureaucratized systems. George Ritzer proposes the concept of "McDonaldization of society", offering a vivid depiction and critique of the efficiency, standardization, and controllability of modern society. Roland Barthes critiques consumerism, Neil Postman entertainmentism, and Henri Lefebvre various forms of spatial hegemony. Foucault launches a particularly sharp critique of the authoritarian powers implicit in modernity, asserting that medicine, knowledge, and other domains generate institutional power; all rationality can evolve into authoritarian power structures. We observe that when rational forces in modern society transform into authoritarian power structures, civilized authoritarianism and violence ensue, producing myriad inescapable, overt or covert control mechanisms rooted in modernity's civilized discourse. Ultimately, this leads to C. W. Mills' paradox of "rationality without reason".

Individuals living within modernity have also undergone subtle yet pervasive alienation. (1) Extreme individualization: Individualism is reshaping young people's values, emphasizing individual rights and defending individuality. Leveraging the convenience of modern society, individuals rarely need to rely directly on others for sustenance, given the presence of public services and markets. This individualization, supported by economic and social systems, is also known as institutionalized individualism. It brings diversity but also fosters a sense of boundaries and loneliness. (2) Diminishing empathy: People primarily communicate through electronic media and virtual platforms, reducing face-to-face interactions. The estrangement of interpersonal relationships creates a sense of coldness, weakening empathy and understanding towards lifestyles and values outside oneself. (3) Alienated "one-dimensional man": In modern systems, individuals become powerless cogs in the political-economic

machinery, losing their natural human attributes, critical thinking, and creativity. They increasingly transform into soulless engineers, heartless technocrats, and joyful robots. (4) Refined selfishness and anxiety: People are intensely desirous of money, power, and fame, acutely aware of existential pressures, leading to increasing anxiety and the emergence of the so-called "anxiety society" and anxious personalities. When this anxiety reaches its extreme, it breeds refined selfishness and a sense of nihilism about the meaning of life. In summary, an immature modern society is confining humanity within an iron cage of modernity, eroding visions and imaginations of a better future.

From a macro perspective, modern society is exhibiting several forms of rational authoritarianism; microscopically, individuals are gradually alienating within modernity. We remain in an immature modern society. How to make modern society more desirable and foster good governance is the starting point of this article.

2 Literature Review: Constructive Ideas on Desirable Modern Society

In the processes of industrialization and modernization, colonial hegemony and world wars emerged. Looking at the contemporary world, numerous issues such as the Russia-Ukraine war, the Middle East crisis, the China-US trade war, the confrontation between South Korea and Japan, the Korean Peninsula issue, the Taiwan Strait crisis, and poverty in Africa continue to threaten world peace and development. Regarding the overall order of the world, neoliberalism has encountered "incompatibility" in the non-Western world, particularly in East Asia, where neoliberalism has instead transformed into an ideological weapon for the consolidation of elite classes and their collusion in exploiting the interests of the grassroots people.

In terms of the modern world order, American political scientist Samuel Huntington proposed the theoretical framework of "the clash of civilizations", arguing that conflicts would persist on the fringes of civilizations. Chinese sociologist FEI Xiaotong, on the other hand, believed that cultural awareness, rather than civilizational clashes, is the future of the modern world. His theory of cultural awareness can be summarized as follow: "appreciating one's own beauty, admiring others' beauty, sharing beauty together, and achieving universal harmony"(各美其美，美人之美，美美与共，天下大同). ZHAO Tingyang introduced the concept of the "Tianxia system"(天下体系), attempting to construct a world order with a center and a periphery where both respect each other. German sociologist Ulrich Beck and Korean sociologist HAN Sang-Jin have advocated cosmopolitanism, striving to create a better world order that differs from state-centrism and neoliberalism.

Habermas proposed "communicative rationality" as a theoretical solution to modern social crises. In modern society, normal communication between individuals and groups is increasingly disappearing, replaced by the control of technocratic state-centrism and market-centric capitalism, leading to highly irrational communication. Habermas's theory of "communicative rationality" essentially seeks a new mode of communication and social construction that transcends both state-centrism and market-centrism.

In response to the risk society, Beck's theoretical proposal is Cosmopolitan Sociology, which aims to establish a sociology of universal love transcending national borders. In Cosmopolitan Sociology, the primary agency for building a desirable modern world is not the state but individuals and groups with a cosmopolitan mindset, fostering a reflective cosmopolitan publicness. Beck holds high hopes for Cosmopolitan Sociology, envisioning cosmopolitanization of the modern world. He encourages East Asian scholars to utilize their theoretical resources, freeing themselves from the theoretical presuppositions of Western sociology, to create East Asian reflective cosmopolitanism. Beck also introduced the imaginative concept of "second modernity", which critically examines the first modernity and advocates for humanity's progression beyond its immaturity towards more mature second modernity.

HAN Sang-Jin observes changes among South Korea's once-vibrant middle class ("jungmin"), who led the democratization in the 1960s-1980s but failed to sustain this momentum. Having become vested interests, "jungmin" relied on political strongmen to safeguard their class interests, gradually transforming into supporters of authoritarianism and rationalizing income inequality and class solidification under neoliberal ideology. This triggered populist resistance from the lower classes, tearing apart South Korean politics. To bridge this political divide, HAN Sang-Jin proposed the concept of "In-Between Common Politics" (IBC politics), focusing on establishing connectivity between politically polarized groups. IBC politics does not seek a midpoint or central force, nor does it rely on politicized special groups, states, or political strongmen. Instead, it aims to develop cosmopolitan alliances or groups in the middle ground, relying on public citizens (rather than state citizens) to build a healthy democratic society. HAN Sang-Jin summarizes the key mechanism of IBC politics as "de-polarization and connection"(脱极通间). IBC politics reflects and transcends the social theory of "jungmin" theory, offering an enlightening theoretical solution to group fragmentation and political polarization in modern societies. Guided by reflective sociology, HAN Sang-Jin endeavors to integrate theoretical resources from both East and West, hoping to facilitate the second modern transformation of modern societies.

Chinese social scientists are also engaged in reflective sociology efforts to create a desirable modern society. Sociologist QU Jingdong, from the perspectives of art history,

attempts to retrieve the transcendence and divinity lost by modern humans through Chinese Mountains-and-Waters paintings(山水画) and works by Western artists like Joseph Turner, providing academic remedies for modern spiritual crises. Anthropologist WANG Mingming, following the Durkheim-Mauss tradition, seeks to transcend the analytical framework and narrative mode of the state and government, understanding human existence from a societal and civilizational perspective, ultimately arriving at an anarchist vision of desirable modern world. Sociologists ZHOU Feizhou and XIAO Ying explore the Confucian social theory embedded in Chinese families, using the family as a central lens to study rural-urban migration in China. They argue that the resilience of Chinese families across time serves as a social foundation for resisting excessive individualism and fostering healthy societies. Anthropologist XIANG Biao expresses concern about young people increasingly living in a virtual world devoid of face-to-face communication, losing their sense of "the nearby"(附近). He encourages young people to discover and create "the nearby", an effort to build micro-communities and counteract the escalating drawbacks of individualization. The sociologist Li Qiang of Tsinghua University conducted the "New Qinghe Experiment"(新清河实验) in Beijing's Qinghe community, introducing academic teams to promote its healthy development. In summary, the efforts of Chinese social scientists mainly focus on three aspects: theoretical and empirical research on community-building (including communities, families, and "the nearby"); analytical frameworks that transcend state/government-centrism to enable more natural and healthier societal or civilizational development; and explorations of the modern human psyche to rebuild mental health.

3 New Perspectives on Confucianism: As Sociological Theory

3.1 Modernization of Confucianism (Politically & Academically)

Since the late Qing Dynasty, Confucianism in China has undergone numerous vicissitudes. ZHANG Zhidong, a prominent minister of the late Qing Dynasty, advocated the principle of "Chinese Culture as Essence, Western Knowledge for Practical Use"(中学为体，西学为用), emphasizing the preservation of the state regime and cultural values while adopting Western industrial, commercial, and military technologies. Guided by this principle, ZENG Guofan, ZHANG Zhidong, LI Hongzhang, and SHENG Xuanhuai initiated the Westernization Movement(洋务运动), establishing modern factories. However, the defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 signaled that reliance solely on Westernization Movement was insufficient for national rejuvenation, prompting the agenda of political reform (beyond mere material

improvements). Emperor Guangxu, aided by KANG Youwei and LIANG Qichao, attempted constitutional monarchy through the Hundred Days' Reform（百日维新）, which though failed, led to the abolition of the imperial examination system in 1905.

Revolutionaries like Sun Yat-sen overthrew the Qing Dynasty and established the Republic of China. In his "Three People's Principles"(三民主义), Sun Yat-sen articulated his fundamental views on Confucianism within "Nationalism"(民族主义), stating, "We must first restore the inherent old morality; only with inherent morality can we aspire to restore our inherent national status." He emphasized the importance of old morality such as loyalty, filial piety, benevolence, trustworthiness, and peace. Sun Yat-sen also said, "China has a most systematic political philosophy, which has not been seen or clearly stated by foreign great politicians, and that is the passage 'studying the phenomena of nature in order to acquire knowledge, cultivating sincerity and uprightness of mind, cultivating one's morality and regulating one's family, administering a country well and bringing peace to the world'（格物致知，诚意正心，修身齐家，治国平天下）in the book 'Great Learning'(大学)...These principles essentially belong to the scope of morality, but it is appropriate to put them into the scope of intelligence today." Sun Yat-sen argued that Confucian morality should not serve as a political ideology but rather as a form of knowledge in modern society. As a politician, he did not conduct a knowledge sociological examination of Confucianism.

The Communist Party of China's revolutionary leadership vigorously opposed Confucianism, with notable periods including the May Fourth Movement, Land Reform, and the Cultural Revolution. The May Fourth Movement chanted the slogan "Overthrow the House of Confucius", while Land Reform eradicated the economic foundation of the gentry-landlord class. The Cultural Revolution fiercely criticized Confucianism and bureaucratic inequality. Mao Zedong famously remarked, "Confucianism's fame is high, but its substance is chaff." Seeking to establish a new communist endeavor unprecedented in human history, Mao aimed to foster equal comradely relations in People's Republic of China, whereas Confucianism rationalized inequality. During the Cultural Revolution, through populism, Mao's "Criticism of Confucius" intended to correct bureaucratism, which had deep Confucian roots. By criticizing Confucianism, Mao hoped to transcend it, nurturing new socialist individuals and forging a new communist world.

After reform and opening-up, China's economy flourished, and ideas became more liberal than during the Mao era. In the 1980s and 1990s, scholars began to extract concepts like Confucian capitalism or Confucian modernity from East Asia's rapid economic development, paralleling "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," exemplified by YU Ying-shi's "Religious Ethics and Merchant Spirit in Modern China"(《中国近世宗教伦理与商人精神》). The implication was that East Asian

countries could also become modern powers through capitalism. Neo-Confucian scholars like DU Weiming and JIN Yaoji also argued that Confucian civilization could develop industries, markets, democratic politics, and modern social systems.

The trend of denigrating Confucianism that began in the late Qing Dynasty reversed with East Asia's economic rise, culminating in the "Sinology Fever" in early 21st-century China, marked by the popularity of YU Dan's "Lectures on the Analects of Confucius" in 2006. In July 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his speech celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China, proposed, "We must adhere to the integration of the basic principles of Marxism with China's specific realities and with China's excellent traditional culture." This "second integration" of Marxism with China's traditional culture, including Confucianism, legitimately placed traditional Chinese culture on the ideological stage of modern China. This represents a pivotal reinterpretation by the CPC of the relationship between socialism and Confucianism.

As early as the 1990s, FEI Xiaotong proposed the influential concept of "cultural awareness" which refers to people living within a culture having self-awareness of its origins, formation, characteristics, and development trends. This self-awareness aims to strengthen the autonomy of cultural transformation and secure the independent status in adapting to new environments and eras. FEI outlined the content of cultural consciousness as "appreciating one's own beauty, admiring others' beauty, sharing beauty together, and achieving universal harmony" (各美其美，美人之美，美美与共，天下大同). Fei's two primary goals were: first, China's modernization should not sever its historical ties but respect its traditions; second, different nations should not fall into civilizational conflicts but coexist harmoniously. In articles such as "Reflections in the Confucius Forest"(《孔林片思》) and "On Expanding the Traditional Boundaries of Sociology"(《试谈扩展社会学的传统界限》), FEI Xiaotong affirmed the modern academic value of Confucianism in China. In "Reflections in the Confucius Forest", he stated, "Humanity is in dire need of a Confucius of the new era. This new Confucius must not only understand his own people but also other ethnicities and religions. He must comprehend the relationships between nations, religions, and countries from a higher level of mental attitude." In "On Expanding the Traditional Boundaries of Sociology", he further elaborated, "In China's native tradition, the ancient philosophers, Confucianism, and Taoism are fundamental knowledge for understanding Chinese society, which cannot be overlooked. In particular, many aspects of Neo-Confucianism during the Song and Ming dynasties(宋明理学) deserve great attention. Neo-Confucianism can be regarded as the essence and culmination of Chinese culture, and is indeed a rare key to exploring the spirit, psychology, and behavior of the Chinese people." This article, "On Expanding the Traditional Boundaries of Sociology", affirms

the sociological significance of Confucianism, pointing out its immense academic potential for rejuvenation through social-scientification, and illuminating the path for exploring the integration of Confucianism and sociology.

Following FEI Xiaotong, Chinese sociologists began reinterpreting Confucian classics from a sociological perspective. Professor ZHOU Feizhou at Peking University, focusing on ancient Chinese ritual(礼) systems and Mourning costume(丧服) system, sought to excavate ancient ideological resources for Chinese sociology. ZHOU Feizhou argued that Confucianism still significantly influences Chinese society's functioning and people's beliefs. Interpersonal Relationship Ethics of "love those who are close, respect those who deserve respect"(亲亲&尊尊) prevail, filial piety remains the core principle of Chinese families, and benevolence(仁) and righteousness(义) are the lofty moral standards. In the paper "One Root and One Body: The Foundation of Chinese Social Theory"(《一本与一体：中国社会理论的基础》), ZHOU Feizhou（2021） stated that "the basis of traditional Chinese society is 'one-body centrality'(一体本位) rather than 'individual centrality'(个体本位), rooted in the social consciousness of 'one root'(一本), embodied in the unity of father and son(父子一体), the unity of mother and son(母子一体), rather in Heaven or God. This social consciousness of 'One Root and One Body' forms a social ethical system centered on filial piety, echoing the 'isomorphic structure of family and state'(家国同构)." ZHOU excavated the roots of Chinese social theory from the family, opposing the intensifying trend of individualization. He also sought to theoretically elucidate China's "Integration of family and state"(家国一体) theory, distinct from the nation-state logic of modern state systems. In summary, Zhou traced sociological theories back to pre-Qin Confucian social thought, aiming to establish a native Chinese sociology and provide a reliable theoretical framework for Chinese-style modernization.

While ZHOU Feizhou's efforts focused on promoting the Sinicization of sociology, HAN Sang-Jin elaborated on Confucianism's position in world sociological theories. HAN believed that Confucianism could provide theoretical resources for reflective modernity. Drawing from the Confucian concept of "all things under heaven belong to the public"(天下为公), HAN proposed establishing a global risk community based on Cosmopolitan publicness. This concept embodies a positive, constructive Cosmopolitan moral orientation. HAN extracted from Neo-Confucianism the ideological resources for building the publicness of global civil society, particularly its survival, deliberative, and ecological orientations. Furthermore, as Cosmopolitanism, Reflexive Confucianism does not center on the state but relies on voluntary associations, neighborhoods, churches, and other cosmopolitan agencies, helping to break through the state-centric political-economic authoritarian system in East Asia's compressed modernization process. In summary, HAN's knowledge exploration from a

cosmopolitan sociology and reflective modernity perspective on the relations between Confucianism and sociology made enlightening contributions to humanity's entry into second modernity.

3.2 Confucian Sociology: My Review

In the modern world, it is largely improbable to restore the institutional power of traditional Confucianism (monarchical, patriarchal, clan, and gentry authorities). Social movements and ideological revolutions since the Enlightenment have shattered traditional values, with democracy, freedom, and equality firmly entrenched in the public mind. The decoupling of Confucianism from its traditional institutional power represents an inevitable trend, making it difficult to re-politicize the Confucianism. However, the intellectualization of Confucianism remains viable. Beyond philosophical speculation, we can integrate theoretical and empirical research with Confucianism from a social science perspective, thereby facilitating its transformation into a social science discipline and establishing so-called Confucian sociology(儒学社会学) or social science Confucianism(社科儒学).

(1) Civilization Studies and Liberal Studies

Confucianism serves as a comprehensive narrative of East Asian (primarily Chinese) civilization, akin to Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, which condense a holistic value system and reflect on the meaning of life from birth to death for East Asians (mainly Chinese). Reinterpreting Confucianism through sociological lenses enables modern East Asians to consciously comprehend their society in sociological terms and allows individuals from other civilizations to understand East Asian lifestyles, thereby fostering reconciliation and communication among diverse civilizations. Given the disparities in civilizational traditions, modern transformation paths vary, particularly warranting vigilance against non-Western countries falling into Western-style modernity crises. Exploring the civilizational traditions and modernization of non-Western countries also signifies probing alternative possibilities of modernization.

One of my key teaching and research foci is to develop liberal studies grounded in Confucian sociology by elucidating the connection between Confucianism and sociology. Discussing Confucianism alone may evoke a retrogressive, conservative impression. Yet, coupling it with sociology rejuvenates Confucianism in modern society, while enabling sociology to take root in China's historical and cultural context, thereby enhancing its explanatory power. As a result, both Confucianism and sociology can acquire new vitality and development. I aspire to shape erudite and enlightened modern individuals through liberal studies rooted in Confucian sociology, fostering a

healthier modern transformation in China and East Asia. Perhaps, the East Asian civilization, with Confucianism as its foundation, can distill a novel modern social theory, pioneering a non-Western path to modernity.

(2) Reflective Sociology

Bourdieu introduced reflective sociology, or sociology of sociology, which focuses not on what facts are but on how they emerge and whether they are reasonable, rational and legal. Confucianism provides theoretical resources for reflective modernity. Firstly, while civilizations worldwide address human life and death in diverse ways, they all pursue noble values. Few civilizations oppose the pursuit of democracy, freedom, equality, and fraternity—values advocated by modernity. Nevertheless, neoliberal modernization may distort these values: democracy may become tyranny of the majority, freedom into extreme individualism, equality into extreme populism, and fraternity into hypocritical selfishness.

Confucianism offers an apparently paradoxical yet convergent path to these universally cherished values. Confucian democracy is led by sages (Meritocracy Politics), restraining democratic tyranny. Confucian freedom is found within interpersonal relationship and ethical constraints. Confucian equality acknowledges reasonable inequalities while fostering connectedness and equality through interpersonal relationship ethics. Confucian fraternity acknowledges different love between intimacy and distance(亲疏有差), between inside and outside(内外有别), extending love to "all under heaven are my brothers and sisters"(民胞物与). In essence, Confucian modernity solutions seek democracy amidst non-democracy, freedom amidst non-freedom, equality amidst inequality, and fraternity amidst non-fraternity. This dialectical theoretical framework could serve as a reflective sociological resource in dialogue with neoliberal modernization.

(3) Sociology of Interpersonal Relationships or Guanxi Sociology

A healthy society relies on healthy interpersonal relationships. From birth, individuals are embedded in various relationships—parental, sibling, spousal, friend, classmate, colleague, and fellow townsman, each governed by distinct interpersonal relationship ethics requiring specialized discernment and management. Intimate relationships necessitate heightened emotional investment. Disregarding interpersonal relationship ethics can strain interpersonal relationships. If parents are not benevolent or children are not filial, the parent-child relationship deteriorates. Sociology of interpersonal relationships derived from Confucianism explores the significance of establishing interpersonal relationship and ethics for fostering healthy society. Relying solely on

political power and economic interests for communication can lead to political-economic authoritarianism, thwarting Habermas's communicative rationality.

In the Confucian sociology of interpersonal relationships, the moral principles governing relationships and ethics are benevolence（仁）and righteousness（义）. Benevolence (仁) refers to love, starting from immediate family ties and extending in a hierarchical manner to universal love. Confucianism believes that benevolence(仁) is a compassionate heart, a natural response to the inherent goodness of human nature, and has the initiating significance of behavior. Righteousness（义）signifies appropriateness, ensuring love is expressed just right, neither excessive nor insufficient; do what is right, not do what is wrong. Confucianism believes that righteousness (义)is a heart that distinguishes between shame and evil, governs and moderates benevolence(仁), endowing behaviors with normative significance. Optimal interpersonal relationships embody the harmonious interplay of benevolence(仁)and righteousness（义）. For instance, filial piety embodies the fullest expression of benevolence(仁) and righteousness（义）for children to parents. In daily practice, benevolence(仁) also signifies empathy, fostering a state of profound understanding and communication between individuals, akin to Habermas's communicative rationality.

Confucianism advocates a path of self-cultivation, family harmony, good governance, and world peace (修身、齐家、治国、平天下). This order encompasses all relationships and their corresponding ethics, forming Differential Pattern of Relationships(差序格局). From oneself to family, friends, neighbors, communities, companies, and nations, various relationship contexts test how individuals can embody the fullest expression of benevolence(仁) and righteousness（义）. Researching and contemplating how to appropriately manage various relationships in modern society, adjusting old ones, and regulating new ones, are crucial tasks. In Chinese society, embodying the fullest expression of benevolence(仁) and righteousness（义）remains a lofty moral standard for managing interpersonal relationships.

Notably, after embracing neoliberal individualistic values, East Asian youth often struggle to adapt to the prevalent nepotist societies in East Asian countries, causing dilemmas of interpersonal relationships. Knowledge of Confucian sociology of interpersonal relationships can guide individuals in managing interpersonal relationships at the micro level, thereby fostering healthy societies.

(4) Practical Sociology

Practical sociology transcends disciplinary boundaries, conducting comprehensive sociological research on practices, with a particular emphasis on habitus and strategies. Confucianism, with its strong practicality, serves as a knowledge source for practical sociology, manifested in several aspects:

Firstly, "self-cultivation through rituals(礼)". Confucianism urges learners to practice self-cultivation in mundane tasks like cleaning, reception, seeing, hearing, speaking, and moving, adhering to propriety and moderation. Cultivating a healthy personality necessitates not only knowledge impartation but also practical exercises in seeing, hearing, speaking, and moving.

Secondly, "carrying the Tao through one's life"(以身载道). The realization of any moral principle, or value necessitates practitioners. Confucianism emphasizes that sages should "carry the Tao(道) through their life", encompassing the legitimacy, courage, and path of practice. Only enlightened individuals practicing in the right direction can realize noble ideals. In other words, the rise or fall of the Tao depends on human practice, as "People can expand the influence of the Tao"(人能弘道). Regarding the relations between institutional rules and individual practice, "rules alone cannot enforce themselves"(徒法不足以自行). Without practitioners "carrying the Tao through their life", paradoxical situations arise where "there are rules but no one takes responsibility". Practitioners cannot assume that established rules will be automatically obeyed, lest they succumb to political naivety.

Thirdly, "Meritocracy Politics"(贤能政治). Confucian meritocracy embodies the essence of practical sociology. In Confucianism, leaders' practices determine the success or failure of undertakings. Similarly, only virtuous and capable individuals can ensure the smooth operation and victory of groups or organizations. Able men can assess situations, break conventions, pioneer new trends, and make practices that transcend institutional/structural determinism. However, if they are constrained by certain institutional structures, they may find themselves in a situation of "all horses silent, a lamentable sight"(万马齐暗究可哀). Currently, as various social issues necessitate intellectuals' direct involvement and guidance, many are increasingly confined to the realm of meaningless publishing game, failing to exit the "ivory tower" and contribute to building healthy societies through practice. Isn't this a manifestation of intellectuals being trapped within modern academic systems?

In summary, Confucian practical sociology exhorts individuals to emulate benevolent and righteous gentlemen(仁义君子), commencing with personal cultivation and immediate relationships, striving to build healthy and harmonious societies, and gradually realizing the grand vision of "self-cultivation, family harmony, good governance, and world peace"(修齐治平).

At the conclusion of this section, it must be noted that from knowledge accumulation perspective, Confucianism contributes significantly to fields such as the sociology of knowledge, historical sociology, the history of social thought, and social theory. However, this discussion primarily focuses on the significance of Confucianism in liberal studies, reflective sociology, sociology of interpersonal relationships, and

practical sociology because these aspects are more closely related to the governance themes (including self-cultivation and social governance) explored in this paper.

4 Cases of Good Governance

This section introduces three cases of good governance in Japan and China, and analyzes the underlying concepts and practical paths of good governance from the perspective of Confucian sociology. The three cases are: (1) the "information transmission board" (ITB 回覧板) system commonly found in grassroots governance in Japan; (2) the agricultural volunteer program(AVP) prevalent in Japanese suburbs and rural areas; (3) the gradually emerging community-based NPOs in China. These cases are based on my fieldwork in Japan and China from 2021 to 2024.

4.1 Japan's "information transmission board"(ITB) System

From 2021 to 2022, I conducted rural surveys in Iwate Prefecture in northeastern Japan, Kumamoto Prefecture in southwestern Japan, and Chiba Prefecture in the eastern suburbs of Tokyo, where the ITB system was observed in all three locations. The ITB is a circular notice board with announcements from local governments, self-governing associations(自治会), or other community organizations attached. A self-governing association organizes residents into groups of around ten households, called neighborhood group, within which the ITB circulates, sharing information. After reading the information on the ITB, the resident signs or stamps it before passing it on to the next resident.

The ITB is a governance tool of self-governing associations, which are ubiquitous in Japanese grassroots societies. Members pay a few thousand yen in annual dues to participate in various group activities organized by the self-governing association. The association elects presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, and other staff to oversee daily operations and maintain regular contact with "local governments"(地方自治体) to reflect community sentiment and public opinion. However, the most crucial function of self-governing associations is to maintain community autonomy.

Organizing residents through neighborhood group was a means of grassroots mobilization and social control during World War II in Japan, part of the wartime system. This organizational form resembles China's traditional bao-jia(保甲) system, where group members support and supervise each other. The ITB emerged from this organizational structure. After the war, the neighborhood groups and ITB under self-governing associations became essential mechanisms for community interaction.

The ITB addresses several critical issues. First, it adapts to the reality that some elderly individuals are not proficient in using electronic devices, bridging the "digital divide" to some extent. Second, its circulation compels community members to engage in face-to-face communication, satisfying their social needs. Third, it addresses issue of " lonely deaths" (孤独死), a significant social problem in Japan, as many elderly individuals live alone. The ITB plays a unique role in preventing lonely deaths among the elderly. In summary, the ITB system is a vital mechanism for resisting excessive individualism and fostering community building, embodying the spirit of "benevolence" (仁).

4.2 Japan's Agricultural Volunteer Program (AVP)

The agricultural volunteer program (AVP) operates in virtually all Japanese prefectures, either directly by local governments(地方自治体) or through third-party organizations commissioned by them, connecting farmers with labor needs and citizens willing to volunteer in agriculture. Agricultural volunteers, mostly retirees and a few young and middle-aged individuals interested in agriculture, travel from cities to suburbs or rural areas to work voluntarily, often for 1-2 days a week. Although the work is unpaid, farmers often reciprocate with seasonal local produce or rice, whose value is far below the local minimum hourly wage.

Originating in the 1990s amidst industrialization, urbanization, and aging, the AVP addresses labor shortages in agriculture while fulfilling citizens' spiritual needs for nature, agricultural experiences, and social reconnection. For retirees, volunteering in rural areas provides leisurely labor, agricultural skills, and new friendships, satisfying social and emotional needs. The AVP also provides a sense of belonging for retirees who may feel lost after leaving the intense collective life of Japan's lifelong employment system. After retirement, men staying at home all day long can disrupt the family life pattern of 'men leading the outside and women leading the inside', causing certain tension in the marital relationship. The AVP provides a comfortable location for retired elderly people. Some volunteers have been active in the same farm for up to 20 years. An 83-year-old retiree at Suzuki Farm in Chiba Prefecture's Yachiyo City has volunteered there for 20 years, remarking, "There are over a dozen volunteers here, and we're quite close. It's like a circle of friends. Volunteering here brings me joy. It's a good place for retirees, a sense of purpose, a comfortable location to belong (居場所)".

The AVP is a product of social self-organization, not compelled by state power or economic interests. It helps individuals overcome loneliness, build social reconnections, and forge new communities.

4.3 China's Community-Based NPOs

With China's economic and social progress and rising education and income levels, the number of social organizations has surged from 446,000 in 2010 to 894,000 in 2020. Interest groups, local organizations, and community-based NPOs play increasingly vital roles in areas where state and market reach are limited. In response to the proliferation of non-public economic and social organizations(非公有制经济组织和社会组织), the Chinese Communist Party mandated in September 2016 that Party committees above the county level establish "Committees for Non-Public Economic and Social Organizations" (abbreviated as "two new" committees 两新工委) to regulate and manage these new organizations.

The case of community-based NPO here is Hantang Education Promotion Association (HEPA), a township-level community-based NPO promoting rural education. Founded by young people (primarily post-90s and 00s) from Hantang Town, Shanggao County, Jiangxi Province, the association officially registered in 2023 and had 95 members by August 2024, 70% of whom were graduated college students and 30% in-college students. They noticed that the development of rural education in China is lagging behind, manifested in the increasing gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas, the influx of excellent teachers and students from rural areas into cities, and a small number of impoverished students unable to study and live normally, rural children are increasingly difficult to achieve upward mobility through education. Recognizing the lagging rural education in China, they aimed to contribute to their hometown's education development.

With a council as the decision-making body, the association has departments for secretariat, publicity, scholarships, student aid, activities, and social survey. It designs logos, maintains a WeChat public account and group, and holds online meetings every 1-2 months. Members donate one yuan daily, funding rural education activities. In 2023, it raised approximately 40,000 yuan to reward and assist 47 students. In June 2024, a public welfare consultation group for college entrance examination was established to provide free consultation services for rural parents and students with lower education levels. In August 2024, a week-long public welfare summer class was organized, and 15 college students (including 4 Japanese students) from Peking University, Nanjing University, Renmin University of China, University of Tokyo, Waseda University and other universities were invited to participate in volunteer teaching activities to broaden the vision of rural students. There are relatively few opportunities for rural students in the central and western regions in China to communicate with students from prestigious universities, and both rural parents and students crave high-quality education. The public welfare summer school has been well received by parents and students, with

over 100 primary and middle school students registering to participate. Every day, parents of students send food or drinks as gifts to college students who participate in volunteer teaching.

The president of HEPA is a sociology PhD graduate from Peking University in 2020, currently engaged in teaching and research in sociology at a university in Nanjing, China. The HEPA is his sociological experiment, with the main goal of observing rural social transformation and participating in rural social construction. From the perspective of research method, experimentation is more able to touch the operational logic of the real world than fieldwork. In terms of social benefits, he hopes that college teachers can go out of campus to conduct sociological experiments, explore new development possibilities, and generate positive public influence to enhance public welfare. Specifically, he initiated the establishment of the HEPA with the following three goals. Firstly, improve education. By taking concrete measures to improve the education in the hometown and cultivate more talents. Secondly, promote talents' communication. Through the NPO network of HEPA, everyone can communicate with each other, help each other, and exert greater public welfare power. Thirdly, change the social atmosphere. Through the power of NPO, they can change the social atmosphere in the hometown and enable more and more people to have a public spirit and a philanthropic spirit, rather than falling into a state of apathy and selfishness.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Based on these cases, we can analyze the implications of good governance from Confucian sociology perspective.

Firstly, from Confucian sociology perspective, good governance should orient toward a communal lifestyle rather than individualism. Confucian sociology encourages people to transcend narrow individualism, form social groups based on connections (e.g., blood, geography, profession, interest), and develop a sense of community through good communication. Good governance based on social groups relies on social self-organization rather than state power or economic incentives.

Secondly, from Confucian sociology perspective, good governance embodies benevolence (仁) and righteousness (义). In terms of benevolence(仁), one should care about the existence of others and things beyond oneself from nearby to distance, rather than being overly sensitive and stubbornly defending individual rights; benevolence(仁) embodies a universal love spirit of being responsible for others. As for righteousness(义), one should uphold the moral bottom line and sense of responsibility as a human being, not infringing upon others' interests merely because the rules permit it, nor deliberately exploiting others legally by creating reasonable rules through due

process; righteousness(义) embodies a self-discipline spirit of being responsible for oneself. The benevolent does not act based on individual rights, but on the principle of constructing reasonable relationships. The righteous does not act based on rational profit-making, but on the principle of moral self-discipline. The publicity based on the Confucian spirit of benevolence and righteousness is different from that based on individual rights and rational profit-making. The publicity of Confucianism ultimately aims at community building, while the publicity of neoliberalism ultimately leads to individual protection, producing widely connected yet lonely individuals, and even creating a "Leviathan" where "all are against all".

Thirdly, from Confucian sociology perspective, good governance relies on sages imbued with Confucian public spirit. Free, democratic, and equal institutional rules do not function autonomously but require support and adjustment from intellectuals or activists with Confucian public spirit. A well-governed group should respect democracy, freedom, and equality without insisting on them, especially not using them as tools for personal selfish gain. The organizing principle of good governance is Confucian benevolence, righteousness, and public spirit, rather than neoliberalism. This is summarized as "Confucianization of institutional rules", with sages as their exemplars. Confucian sages are precisely the ones who embody the spirit of "Confucianization of institutional rules".

In conclusion, Confucian sociology advocates a social centrism, communitarianism, and cosmopolitanism approach to good governance, opposing state and market centrism and excessive individualism. from Confucian sociology perspective, it is possible to cultivate a Confucian publicness rather than a neoliberal publicness. Confucian sociology offers East Asian theoretical resources for reflective modernity, helping modern humans transcend the first modernity toward a healthier and more mature second modernity.

논어와 사회학: 오늘날 좋은 거버넌스란 무엇인가[1]

Analects of Confucius and Sociology:
What Does Good Governance Mean Today?

1. 문제제기

1.1 나쓰메 소세키 소설의 세 가지 세계

나쓰메 소세키(夏目漱石, なつめ そうせき)는 소설 『산시로(三四郎)』(1908년 발표)에서 "세 개의 세계"라는 개념을 통해 메이지 후기 일본 사회의 변화에 대한 그의 기본적인 견해를 밝혔다. "세 개의 세계" 중 첫 번째 세계는 정감이 넘치지만 돌아갈 수 없는 과거의 전통 사회를 가리킨다. 이는 도시에 진입하여 공부하고 일하게 된 후 자주 돌아갈 수 없는 고향과, 고향에 남아 자신을 그리워하고 자신도 그리워하는 어머니의 이미지로 표상되었다. 두 번째 세계는 눈앞에 있는 직장 공간을 의미한다. 이는 버스를 타고 출근하는 모습으로, 겉으로는 매일 일정을 여유 있게 세우는 것 같지만 뜻대로 잘 안 되는 분주함과 무력감이 있다. 직장은 인생 계획을 세우고 인생의 의미를 실현하는 중요한 장소이면서도 강한 통제력을 가진 정치경제 체제이기도 하다. 세 번째 세계는 현대 도시다. 현대 도시는 번영하고 발전했으나 사람들에게 구속감을 주며, 누구나 들어갈 수는 있지만 완전히 융화되기는 어려운 새로운 세계다. 나쓰메는 이 세 번째 세계를 이렇게 묘사한다. "제3의 세계는 찬란하게 빛나고 봄빛이 넘실대는 듯하다. 전등이 있고, 은수저가 있으며, 환호성과 웃음소리, 거품이 나는 샴페인, 만물의 으뜸이라 할 수 있는 아름다운 여성이 있다. … 이 세계는 눈앞에 있지만 가까이 가기 어렵다. … 그럼에도 불구하고 당연히 번영하고 발전해야 할 이 세계가 스스로의 손발을 묶고, 자유로운 출입의 통로를 막아버렸다." (『산시로』, p69) 나쓰메 소세키가 언급한 세 번째 세계의 이미지는 근대 일본이 가난하고 낙후되며 계급이 엄격했던 전통 시대에서 벗어났지만, 메이지 유신이 약속한 아름다운 세계로 들어가지는 못했음을 의미한다. 나쓰메는 소설에서 이렇게 말한다. "우리는 옛 일본의 압박을 견딜 수 없는 청년들이다. 동시에 우리는 새로운 서양의 압박도 견딜 수 없는 청년들이다."(『산시로』, p122) 100여 년 전 일본 사회에서 나쓰메 소세키는 이미 "서양의 압박"이라는 표현을 통해 근대성의 역설을 제시했다. 인류는 근대 세계에 진입했지만, 근대성 이론이 제시

하는 아름다운 삶을 살지는 못하고 있다는 것이다.

　산업혁명과 계몽운동 이후, 유럽인들이 먼저 근대성의 문을 열었고, 이후 세계 각국은 거의 비가역적인 근대화의 여정을 시작했다. 이 과정에서 세계 각국의 전통은 정도의 차이는 있지만 모두 파괴되었다. 한편으로는 사상의 해방, 과학기술의 발전, 물질적 풍요, 그리고 더욱 자유롭고 평등하며 민주적이고 다원화된 현대 세계가 형성되고 있다. 그러나 다른 한편으로는 근대성의 문제점들도 나타났다. 왜 현대 세계의 물질적 번영과 함께 인류의 행복감도 거기에 맞게 증가하지 못했는가? 개인의 행위는 점점 더 이성적으로 변화하는데, 하나의 전체로서의 현대 사회는 오히려 점점 더 비이성적으로 되고 있다. 사람들은 점점 현대 사회가 계몽사상가들이 제시한 것만큼 아름답지는 않다고 느끼고 있다.

1.2 위험사회와 동아시아적 서술

　독일 사회학자 울리히 벡(Ulrich Beck)은 현대 사회를 '위험 사회'로 정의했다. 이 개념은 현대성에 대한 총체적 진단으로, 강한 비판적 의미를 지니며, 우리가 살고 있는 현대 사회가 아직 그리 건강하거나 성숙하지 않음을 시사한다. 서구 선진국에서 우리는 경제와 과학기술의 발전, 그리고 사회보장 제도의 완비를 목격했지만, 동시에 고도의 개인화와 집단의 파편화 현상도 보게 되었다. 고도로 개인화된 상태에서 개인은 자신의 권리를 매우 중시하며, 심지어 자신에 대한 보호가 지나칠 수 있다. 이로 인해 사람들 사이의 경계심이 소외감과 외로움으로 변질되고 있다. 극단적인 경우, 고도로 개인화된 현대 사회는 '만인 대 만인의 투쟁'과 같은 '리바이어던(Leviathan)' 상태로 변질될 수 있다. 집단 간의 파편화는 사회적 분열을 야기하고 정치적 대립을 낳으며, 특히 젠더문제와 인종문제는 극단적이고 심지어 병적인 수준으로 전개되었다. 언론의 자유를 숭배하는 미국조차도 집단의 파편화와 정치화로 인해 점점 언론의 자유와 반대되는 방향으로 나아가고 있다.

　동아시아에 위치한 중국, 일본, 한국 세 나라는 고령화와 저출생 같은 심각한 상황이 경제 사회의 지속가능 발전을 크게 위협하고 있다. 또한 사회정치적 상황과 청년 가치관의 변화 등의 문제도 주목해야 한다.

　한국. 한국 사회의 빈부 격차와 계층 고착화가 주목되고 있다. 일부 중산층은 이기적인 이익추구 계층으로 타락했고, 하층민들 사이에서는 포퓰리즘이 확산되고 있다. 신자유주의에 물든 중산층은 정치 권력자에 의존하여 자신들의 기득권과 계급적 지위를 유지하려 하고, 포퓰리스트들은 촛불 집회와 같은 비교적 온건한 대항방식을 채택했다(한상진, 2024). 포퓰리즘은 한국만의 현상이 아니라 전 세계적 추세로, 전 세계 하층민들의 빈부 격차와 계층 고착화에 대한 불만을 대변한다. 현대 한국 사회의 여러 문제들에 직면하여, 상당수의 한국 청년들은 실망을 넘어 절망까지 느끼고 있으며, 일부는 소비주의적·쾌락주의적 인생 태도를 취하고 있다. 'N포 세

대'는 한국 청년들의 환멸감이 깊어졌음 가장 잘 드러낸다. 처음에는 '삼포'(연애, 결혼, 출산 포기)에서 시작하여 나중에는 '오포'(주택 소유와 인간관계도 포기)와 '칠포'(꿈과 희망도 포기)로 확대되었다.

　　일본. 장기적인 경제 침체, 빈부격차 확대, 정치체제의 보수화, 지정학적 관계의 긴장 등에 의해 일본사회의 정치적 표현이 점점 더 격렬해지고 있다. 2022년 아베 신조 전총리의 암살사건은 정치적 표현의 극단화를 보여주는 대표적인 사례다. 일본 청년들의 정신 상태도 낙관적으로 볼 수 없는 상황이다. 일부 일본 청년들은 'NEET'(Not in Education, Employment or Training, 교육 받지 않고 취업하지 않으며 직업 훈련도 받지 않는 사람)나 '패러사이트 싱글'(성인이 되어도 부모에게 기생하듯 의지하며 사는 사람)로 불린다. 또 다른 일부는 '히키코모리'라고 불리며, 대면적 인간관계가 부족하며 일정 정도 심리적 문제를 겪고 있다. 일본의 경제학자 오마에 겐이치(大前研一)는 활력이 부족한 일본 사회를 '저욕망 사회'로 정의했다. 이는 점점 더 많은 일본인들이 "집을 사지 않고, 차를 사지 않고, 결혼하지 않고, 아이를 낳지 않고, 일하지 않는" 현상 때문이다. 일본 언론인들은 고도로 개인화되고 관계성이 낮은 일본 사회를 '무연(無緣)사회'로 표현한다. '무연 사회'에는 '고독사'의 위험에 처한 독거노인뿐만 아니라, 현재의 생존에 대해 점점 더 불만을 느끼는 독거 청년들도 포함된다.

　　중국. 최근 10년간 중국 정치의 중앙집권화 수준이 크게 강화되었다. 중앙정부의 지방정부에 대한 통제가 더욱 세밀해졌고, 중국 공산당의 간부 관리가 더욱 엄격해졌으며, 경제와 사회에 대한 통제 범위와 강도도 증가하고 있다. 농촌 기층사회에 대한 국가 통제는 역사상 최고점에 도달했다. "서기 주임 1인 겸직(書記主任一肩挑)" 정책은 향진 정부의 촌민위원회에 대한 인사 임명권을 강화했으며, 이는 간접적으로는 마을의 민주적 선거를 부정하는 것이다. 현·향 정부는 "강촌 회사(強村公司)"(저장성의 강촌 회사가 가장 대표적)를 통해 마을 집체 자산과 마을 경제를 직접 운영하고 있다. 중국 사회도 빈부격차와 계층 고착화가 심화되어, 꿈을 잃은 일부 중국 청년들은 "탕핑(躺平)"을 선택하고 "일용직 노동자"가 되었다. 그들은 하루 일하고 이틀 쉬며(오락) 살아가는데, 이러한 생활 상태는 매우 퇴폐적이라고 여겨져 "삼화대신(三和大神)"(선전의 삼화인력시장에 모여 일용직 일자리를 찾는 젊은이들 때문에 붙여진 이름)이라 불린다. 물론 상향이동을 위한 과도한 경쟁에 필사적으로 뛰어드는 중국 청년들도 있지만, 상향 이동을 통한 계층 상승은 매우 어렵다. 많은 중국 청년들이 "누워있고 싶어도 편하게 누울 수 없고, 경쟁하고 싶어도 경쟁할 수 없는" 곤란한 상황에 처해 있다. 탕핑주의와 내권주의가 공존하는 것이 중국식 "불안사회"(王天夫, 2023)의 독특한 풍경을 이룬다.

　　압축적 현대화의 대표주자인 중국, 일본, 한국 세 나라에는 몇 가지 유사한 역설이 형성되었다. 정치 사회적 관점에서 보면, 국가 권력과 기술 관료의 권력이 강화되고, 빈부격차가 확대되며, 계층 고착화가 드러나고, 포퓰리즘이 대두되고 있다. 청년들의 생존 상태를 보면, 한편으로는 능력주의로 인한 불안과 과도한 경쟁이 있고,

다른 한편으로는 상향이동에 대한 희망 없는 비관과 '탕핑'이 있다. 탕핑주의와 과도한 경쟁주의는 사실상 동전의 양면이다. 둘 다 피할 수 없는 거대한 체제의 구조적 통제에 대한 무력감의 표현이다. 현대 청년들의 이러한 기형적인 가치관과 생존 상황은 현대 사회의 한계를 드러낸다. 아마도 이것이 '발전의 아픔'일 것이다. 발전과 아픔 모두 현대 사회라는 모체에서 탄생했다. '발전의 아픔'은 우리에게 현대성 이론에 대한 철저한 반성을 요청한다.

1.3 현대성에 대한 비판과 성찰

고전 사회학자들은 현대성에 대해 강력한 비판을 제기했다. 베버는 세계 각국의 현대화 과정에서 보편적인 합리화 경향이 나타날 것이라고 보았다. 그러나 그는 과도한 합리화가 인간의 마음을 구속하는 '쇠우리'가 될 수 있다고 경고했다. 마르크스는 자본, 노동, 잉여가치, 계급 문제에 대해 매우 비판적인 이론적 설명을 제시했으며, 공산주의 혁명의 실천 방안을 설명했다. 뒤르켐은 현대 사회의 자살 현상을 통해 그 배후에 있는 사회적 아노미 문제를 보았다. 그는 유기적 연대가 사람들에게 더 많은 자유를 주지만, 동시에 사회적 아노미와 도덕적 불균형 등의 문제를 악화시킨다고 지적했습니다.

자본주의의 발전과 체계화에 따라 다양한 체제적 전제와 제도적 패권이 점차 형성되었고, 현대인들은 이로 인한 혜택과 피해를 동시에 받고 있다. 하버마스는 현대 사회의 생활세계가 체계에 의해 식민화되어, 사람들 간의 소통이 점점 더 상품화되고 관료화된 체계에 의해 구속되고 있다고 보았다. 조지 리처는 '사회의 맥도날드화'라는 개념을 제시하며, 현대 사회의 효율화, 표준화, 통제 가능성에 대해 형상적으로 묘사하고 비판했다. 롤랑 바르트는 소비주의를, 닐 포스트먼은 오락주의를, 앙리 르페브르는 다양한 형태의 공간 패권을 비판했다. 푸코는 현대성에 내재된 다양한 전체화하는 권력에 대해 매우 날카로운 비판을 가했다. 그는 의료, 지식 등이 모두 체제적 권력을 생산한다고 보았으며, 모든 이성이 전제적 권력 체제로 변질될 수 있다고 주장했다. 우리는 현대 사회의 다양한 이성적 힘이 전제적 권력 체제로 변질될 때, 문명의 전제와 폭력이 나타나는 것을 볼 수 있다. 이는 현대성의 문명화된 담론을 통해서는 피해갈 수 없는, 때로는 은폐되고 때로는 가시화되는 통제 메커니즘을 생산하게 된다. 결국 밀스가 말한 '이성적이지만 합리적이지 않은 (Rationality without reason)' 현대성의 역설이 나타나게 된다.

현대성 속에서 살아가는 개인들도 자기도 모르게 몇 가지 보편적인 소외 현상을 겪고 있다. (1) 극단적 개인화: 개인주의가 젊은이들의 가치관을 바꾸고 있다. 그들은 개인의 권리를 중시하고 개인의 특수성을 옹호한다. 현대 사회의 편리성 덕분에 공공 서비스와 시장만 있다면 개인은 거의 다른 사람에게 직접 의존하지 않고도 생활을 유지할 수 있다. 이러한 경제와 사회의 체제가 제도적으로 뒷받침하는 개인화

를 '제도적 개인화'라고 부른다. 개인화는 다원화를 가져왔지만, 동시에 경계심과 고독감도 가져왔다. (2) 감정의 점진적 냉담화: 사람들은 주로 전자 매체와 가상 플랫폼을 통해 소통하며, 대면 소통은 줄고 있다. 대인관계가 낯설어지면서 냉담함을 느끼고, 사람들은 타자의 생존 방식과 가치관에 대한 동정심과 감수성이 약화되고 있다. (3) 소외된 '일차원적 인간': 사람들은 현대 체제 속에서 저항할 힘이 부재하는 톱니바퀴가 되어 정치경제 체제의 운용에 맞춰 움직이며, 점점 더 인간의 자연스러운 속성을 잃고 비판성과 창의성을 상실하고 있다. 사람들은 점점 더 영혼 없는 기술자, 도덕을 잃은 기술 전문가, 행복한 로봇이 되어가고 있다. (4) 세련된 이기주의와 불안감: 사람들은 돈, 권력, 명성에 대한 강한 욕망을 가지고 있으며, 생존 압박에 대해 인식하고 있다. 사람들은 점점 더 불안해하고 있으며, 이른바 '불안 사회'와 불안형 인격이 나타나고 있다. 이러한 불안이 극에 달하면 세련된 이기주의자들이 생겨나고, 인생의 의미를 알지 못하는 허무감도 생겨난다. 요컨대, 성숙하지 못한 현대 사회는 인류를 현대성의 쇠우리로 몰아넣고 있으며, 사람들은 미래의 아름다운 세계에 대한 비전과 상상력을 잃어가고 있다.

거시적 관점에서 볼 때, 현대 사회는 여러 형태의 이성의 전제가 나타나고 있다. 미시적 관점에서 볼 때, 개인도 현대성 속에서 점차 소외되어가고 있다. 우리는 여전히 상당히 미성숙한 현대 사회에 살고 있다. 어떻게 하면 현대 사회를 더 아름답게 만들 수 있을까? 어떻게 하면 현대 사회에서 선한 통치를 형성할 수 있을까? 이것이 이 글의 출발점이다.

2. 문헌 검토: 아름다운 현대사회에 대한 건설적 사고

산업화와 현대화 과정에서 식민 패권과 세계대전이 발발했다. 오늘날에도 러시아-우크라이나 전쟁, 중동 위기, 미중 무역 전쟁, 한일 대립, 한반도 문제, 대만해협 위기, 아프리카 빈곤 등 많은 문제가 여전히 세계 평화와 발전을 위협하고 있다. 세계의 총체적 질서에 있어 신자유주의는 비서구 세계에 '조응하지 않는'문제를 겪고 있다. 특히 동아시아에서 신자유주의는 오히려 엘리트 계층의 고착화와 서민들의 이익을 수탈하는 사상적 무기가 되었다. 현대 세계 질서에 대하여 미국의 정치학자 새뮤얼 헌팅턴은 '문명의 충돌'이론틀을 제시했다. 그는 문명의 경계 지역에서 지속적으로 충돌이 발생할 것이라고 보았다. 중국의 사회학자 페이샤오퉁(費孝通)은 문명의 충돌이 아닌 문화적 자각이 현대 세계의 미래라고 보았다. 그의 문화 자각 이론은 16자 격언으로 요약할 수 있다. "각자의 아름다움을 인정하고, 타인의 아름다움을 인정하며, 아름다움을 함께 나누어 천하가 하나 되게 한다.(各美其美，美人之美，美美與共，天下大同)" 자오팅양(趙汀陽)은 '천하체계'라는 개념을 제시하여, 중심과 주변이 있되 서로 존중하는 세계 질서를 구축하려 했다. 독일 사회학자 벡과 한국 사회학자 한상진은 최근 몇 년간 세계시민주의(cosmopolitanism)를 적

극 추진하며, 국가 중심주의와도 다르고 신자유주의와도 다른, 더 합리적인 세계 질서를 창출하려 시도하고 있다.

하버마스는 '의사소통 합리성'을 현대 사회의 위기를 해결하기 위한 이론적 방법으로 제시했다. 현대 사회에서 개인 간, 집단 간의 정상적인 소통이 점점 사라지고 있다. 대신 국가 중심주의적 기술 관료와 시장 중심주의적 자본이 통제하면서, 매우 비합리적인 소통상태가 초래되고 있다. 하버마스의 '의사소통 합리성' 이론은 실제로 국가 중심주의와 시장 중심주의를 초월하는 새로운 소통 방식과 사회 건설 방법을 모색하는 것이다.

벡은 위험사회에 대응하기 위해 '세계시민 사회학'(Cosmopolitan sociology)을 이론적 방법으로 제시했다. 세계시민 사회학은 민족국가의 경계를 넘어서는 박애적 사회학을 구축하고자 한다. 세계시민 사회학에서 아름다운 현대 세계를 구축하는 주체는 주로 국가가 아니라, 세계시민주의(Cosmopolitanism) 이념을 가진 개인과 단체들이며, 이들이 '성찰적 세계시민적 공공성'(reflective cosmopolitan publicness)을 형성한다. 벡은 세계시민 사회학에 큰 기대를 걸었으며, 현대 세계가 세계시민화(cosmopolitization)로 나아가기를 희망했다. 그는 동아시아 학자들이 자신의 이론적 자원을 활용하여 서구 사회학의 이론적 전제에서 벗어나 동아시아의 '성찰적 세계시민주의'를 개척하도록 격려했다. 벡은 또한 '제2현대성'(second modernity)이라는 매우 상상력 넘치는 개념을 제시했다. 이 개념은 제1현대성을 매우 명확하게 비판하면서, 인류가 미성숙한 제1 현대성을 초월하여 더욱 성숙한 제2 현대성으로 나아갈 것을 주장한다.

한상진은 과거 한국의 중산층("中民")이 변화했음에 주목했다. 1960-80년대 한국의 민주화를 주도했던 "중민"이 한국 민주정치의 완성을 계속 이끌지는 못했다. "중민"은 기득권 집단이 된 후 정치 권력자에 의존하여 계급 이익을 고수하기 시작했고, 점차 전제를 지지하는 세력으로 변질되었다. 게다가 신자유주의 이론의 지지 아래 빈부격차와 계층 고착화를 정당화했다. 이는 한국 하층민의 포퓰리즘적 저항을 불러일으켰다. 신자유주의와 포퓰리즘이 한국 정치를 분열시켰다. 이러한 정치적 분열을 해소하기 위해 한상진은 "중도정치"(IBC, In-Between Common Politics) 개념을 제시했다. 이는 정치적으로 극단적으로 분화된 집단 간에 연결성을 어떻게 구축할 것인지를 중점적으로 논의한다. "중도정치"는 중간점이나 중심 세력을 찾는 데 집착하지 않고, 정치화된 특정 집단이나 국가 또는 정치 권력자에 의존하지 않는다. 대신 중간 지대에서 세계시민적 연대나 단체를 발전시키고, 공공 시민(public citizen, 국가 시민이 아닌)에 의한 건강한 민주사회를 구축하는 것이다. 한상진은 "중도정치"의 핵심 메커니즘을 "탈극통간(脫極通間)"으로 요약했다. "중도정치"는 "중민" 사회 이론에 대한 반성과 초월이며, 현대 사회의 집단간 분열과 정치 양극화 문제를 해결하기 위한 통찰력 있는 이론적 방법을 제공한다. 성찰적 사회학을 통해 한상진은 동서양의 이론적 자원을 통합하려 노력하며, 현대 사회의 제2의 근대적 전환(second modern

transformation)을 촉진하고자 한다.

중국의 사회과학자들도 성찰적 사회학을 통해 아름다운 현대 사회를 창출하려는 노력을 하고 있다. 사회학자 취징동(渠敬東)은 산수문명과 예술사의 관점에서, 중국 산수화와 터너 등 서양 예술가의 작품을 통해 현대인이 잃어버린 초월성과 신성을 되찾으려 시도하며, 현대인의 정신적 위기를 해결하기 위한 학문적 대안을 제공하고 있다. 인류학자 왕밍밍(王銘銘)은 뒤르켐-모스 학파의 전통을 따라 국가와 정부의 분석틀과 서사를 초월하여 사회와 문명의 관점에서 인류의 생존 상황을 이해하고, 궁극적으로는 무정부주의적인 아름다운 현대 세계에 도달하고자 한다. 사회학자 저우페이저우(周飛舟)와 샤오잉(肖瑛)은 중국 가족 배후에 내재된 유교사회 이론을 발굴하려 노력하고 있으며, 가족을 중심에 둔 시각으로 중국인의 도시-농촌 이동을 연구하고 있다. 그들은 중국 가족이 역사를 초월하여 강인하게 존재한 만큼, 과도한 개인화에 저항하고 건강한 사회를 창조하는 사회적 기반이라고 본다. 청년들이 점점 더 대면 소통이 부족한 가상 세계에서 살아가며 '주변'에 대한 감수성을 잃어가는 것에 대해 인류학자 샹뱌오(項飆)는 매우 우려하고 있으며, 청년들이 '주변'을 발견하고 창조할 것을 권장한다. 이는 미시적 공동체를 건설하고 점점 심해지는 개인화의 폐단에 대항하는 노력의 일환이기도 하다. 작고한 칭화대의 사회학자 리창(李強)은 베이징 칭허사구(清河社區)에서 '신칭허실험'을 통해 연구팀의 역량을 지역사회에 투입하여 지역사회의 건강한 발전을 촉진했다. 종합하면, 중국 사회과학자들의 노력은 다음 세 가지 측면에 집중되고 있다. 첫째, 공동체 건설에 대한 이론적 연구와 경험 연구(지역사회, 가족, '주변' 등 공동체 건설 포함). 둘째, 국가/정부 중심주의적 분석틀을 넘어서서 사회나 문명의 발전을 더욱 자연스럽고 건강하게 이루도록 노력하는 것. 셋째, 현대인의 정신세계를 탐구하고 현대인의 정신건강 재건을 위해 노력하는 것.

3. 사회학 이론으로서의 유학연구라는 새로운 시각

3.1 유학의 현대화 (Politically & academically)

청나라 말기 이래로 유학은 중국에서 여러 번의 운명의 부침을 겪었다. 장즈둥(張之洞)은 "중학위체, 서학위용(중국의 학문을 근본으로 삼고, 서양의 학문을 실용으로 삼는다, 中學爲體, 西學爲用)"을 제안하며, 국체와 문화 관념을 바꾸지 않고 서양의 공업, 상업, 군사 기술을 배우자고 주장했다. 이 이념을 받아들여 쩡궈판(曾國藩), 장즈둥(張之洞), 리훙장(李鴻章), 성쉬안화이(盛宣懷) 등이 양무운동을 전개하고 현대적 공장을 설립했다. 그러나 청일전쟁의 패배는 단순히

양무운동에만 의존해서는 국력을 강화하기에 충분하지 않음을 보여주었다. 따라서 정치개혁(단순한 물질적 개혁이 아닌)이 필요하다는 사고가 제기되었다. 광서제(光緖帝)는 캉유웨이(康有爲), 량치차오(梁啟超)의 도움을 받아 무술변법을 시행하여 입헌군주제를 실시하려 했다. 무술변법은 실패했지만, 과거제도는 얼마 후인 1905년에 폐지되었다.

쑨중산(孫中山) 등 혁명인사들은 격렬한 혁명수단을 통해 청 왕조를 무너뜨리고 중화민국을 설립했다. 쑨중산은 "삼민주의(三民主義)" 이론을 제시하여, "민족주의" 속에서 유가 사상에 대한 기본 견해를 밝혔다. "고유의 옛 도덕을 먼저 회복해야 합니다. 고유의 도덕이 있어야 고유의 민족적 지위를 회복할 수 있습니다." 그는 "충효, 인애, 신의, 평화" 등 옛 도덕의 중요성을 언급했다. 쑨중산은 또한 "중국에는 가장 체계적인 정치철학이 있습니다. 외국의 위대한 정치가들도 아직 보지 못하고, 그렇게 명확하게 말하지 못한 것인데, 그것이 바로 대학에서 말하는 '격물치지, 성의정심, 수신제가치국평천하(格物致知, 誠意正心, 修身齊家治國平天下)'라는 구절입니다... 이러한 정심성의, 수신제가의 도리는 본래 도덕의 범주에 속했지만, 오늘날에는 이를 지식의 범주 안에서 논해야 적절할 것입니다" 라고 말했다. 쑨중산은 유가의 옛 도덕을 정치 이데올로기로 여겨서는 안 되며, 지식의 형태로 현대에 포함시켜야 한다고 보았다. 쑨중산은 정치가였기에 유가 사상에 대해 지식사회학적 고찰을 하지는 않았다.

중국 공산당이 주도한 혁명은 유교 사상을 격렬히 반대했다. 그 중 몇 차례 절정기는 5·4운동, 토지개혁, 문화대혁명이다. 5·4 운동은 "공자의 거점을 부수자"는 구호를 외쳤고, 토지개혁은 신사-지주의 경제적 기반을 제거했으며, 문화대혁명은 유교 사상과 불평등한 관료주의를 강력히 비판했다. 마오쩌둥은 "공자학은 이름만 높을 뿐 실제로는 겨와 쭉정이"라고 직설적으로 말한 바가 있다. 마오쩌둥이 실현하고자 한 공산주의 신사업은 인류 역사상 전례 없는 장대한 시도였다. 그는 신중국에 평등한 동지관계를 수립하고자 했기에 유교 학설은 불평등을 정당화했다고 본다. 마오쩌둥이 문화대혁명에서 "공자 비판"을 한 본래 의도는 포퓰리즘적 군중 노선을 이용해 관료주의를 시정하려는 것이었고, 관료주의의 배후에는 매우 깊은 유교 사상이 놓여 있었다. 마오쩌둥이 유교 사상을 비판한 것은 유교 사상을 초월하여 사회주의적 새인간을 양성하고 공산주의 신세계를 실현하기를 희망했기 때문이다.

공자의 거점을 부수고 개혁개방을 추진한 이후, 중국의 경제는 상대적으로 빠르게 발전했고, 마오쩌둥 시대보다 사상도 더 자유로워졌다. 1980-90년대의 일부 학자들은 동아시아 경제의 급속한 발전에서 유교자본주의 또는 유교적 근대성 등의 개념을 추출하기도 했다. 이는 『프로테스탄트 윤리와 자본주의 정신』에 대응하는 개념으로, 대표적인 작품으로는 위잉스(餘英時)가 저술한 『중국 근세 종교 윤리와 상인 정신(中國近世宗教倫理與商人精神)』이 있다. 이는 동아시아 국가들도

자본주의 발전을 통해 현대 강국이 될 수 있음을 주장한다. 뚜웨이밍(杜維明), 진야오지(金耀基) 등 신유교 학자들도 유교 문명이 산업, 시장, 민주정치, 현대 사회 체계를 발전시킬 수 있다고 보았다.

청나라 말기에 시작된 유학 폄하 사조는 동아시아 경제의 부상과 함께 역사적 반전을 맞이했다. 21세기 초 중국에서는 '국학열'이 일어났고, 그 상징적 사건으로 2006년 '위단의 논어 강의'가 폭발적 인기를 끌었다. 2021년 7월, 중국 국가주석 시진핑은 중국 공산당 창당 100주년 기념 대회 연설에서 다음과 같이 말했다. "맑스주의 기본 원리를 중국의 구체적 실제와 결합하고, 중화 우수 전통 문화와 결합하는 것을 견지해야 합니다." 여기서 맑스주의 기본 원리를 중화 우수 전통 문화와 결합하는 것(일명 '제2의 결합')으로 인해, 유교 사상을 포함한 중화 우수 전통 문화가 정당하게 현대 중국의 사상 무대에 오르게 되었다. 중국 공산당이 사회주의와 유교 학설의 관계에 대해 새로운 전환점을 마련한 것이다.

1990년대 초, 페이샤오퉁은 매우 영향력 있는 개념인 '문화자각(文化自覺)'을 제시했다. 문화자각의 의미는 다음과 같다. "특정 문화 속에서 살아가는 사람들이 그들의 문화에 대해 자기 인식을 가지고, 그 유래와 형성 과정, 특징 및 발전 방향을 이해하는 것이다. 이러한 자기 인식은 문화 전환에 대한 자주적 능력을 강화하고, 새로운 환경과 새로운 시대에 적응하는 문화를 선택하는 데 있어 자주적 위치를 확보하기 위한 것이다." 문화자각의 내용은 "각자의 아름다움을 인정하고, 타인의 아름다움을 인정하며, 아름다움을 함께 나누어 천하가 하나 되게 한다"로 요약된다. 페이샤오퉁이 '문화자각'을 통해 제시한 주요 목표는 두 가지다. 첫째, 중국의 현대화는 역사와 단절되어서는 안 되며 중국의 역사적 전통을 존중해야 한다. 둘째, 서로 다른 민족국가들은 문명 충돌에 빠져서는 안 되며 아름다움을 함께 나누어야 한다. 「공림편사(孔林片思)」과 「사회학의 전통적 경계 확장에 대한 시론(試談擴展社會學的傳統界限)」 등의 글에서 페이샤오퉁은 중국 유교 사상의 현대 학문적 가치를 긍정적으로 평가했다. 「공림편사(孔林片思)」에서는 이렇게 말했다. "현재 인류에게는 새로운 시대의 공자가 필요합니다. 새로운 공자는 자기 민족뿐 아니라 다른 민족과 종교도 이해하는 사람이어야 합니다. 그는 더 높은 차원에서 민족과 민족, 종교와 종교, 국가와 국가 간의 관계를 이해해야 합니다." 또한 「사회학의 전통적 경계 확장에 대한 시론」에서는 "중국 본토의 전통에서 고대 제자백가, 유가, 도가의 사상은 우리가 중국사회를 이해하는 기초 지식 중 하나로, 무시할 수 없습니다. 특히 송 명리학의 많은 내용은 매우 중요하게 다뤄져야 합니다. 명리학은 중국 문화의 정수이자 집대성이라 할 수 있으며, 실제로 중국인의 정신, 심리, 행동을 탐구하는 데 있어 귀중한 열쇠입니다." 라고 말했다. 「사회학의 전통적 경계 확장에 대한 시론」 은 유학의 사회학적 의의를 긍정하고, 유학이 사회과학화를 통해 새로운 생기를 얻을 수 있다는 학문적 전망을 제시하며, 유학과 사회학의 결합 경로를 탐색하였다.

페이샤오퉁 이후, 중국 사회학자들은 사회학적 관점에서 유교 경전을 재해석하기 시작했다. 베이징대의 저우페이저우 교수는 중국 고대의 예학 제도와 상복체계에 입각하여 중국 사회학의 고대 사상 자원을 발굴하려 했다. 저우페이저우는 중국 사회의 운영과 중국인의 관념이 여전히 유교 사상의 영향을 크게 받고 있다고 본다. 친친(親親), 존존(尊尊)의 관계 윤리가 여전히 중국 사회에 성행하고 있으며, 부자자효(父慈子孝)는 여전히 중국 가정의 핵심 원칙이고, 인지의진(仁至義盡)은 여전히 중국 사회의 숭고한 도덕 기준이라고 본다. 그는 「일본과 일체: 중국 사회 이론의 기초」라는 글에서 이렇게 말했다. "중국 전통사회 구조의 기초는 '개체본위'가 아닌 '일체본위'이다. '일체'의 사상은 '일본'의 사회의식에서 비롯되었는데 이는 하늘이나 신을 본으로 삼는 것이 아니라 부모를 본으로 삼는 것이다. '일체'는 '부자일체', '모자일체'를 의미한다. '일본'과 '일체'의 사회의식은 '효'를 근본으로 하는 사회 윤리 체계를 구성하며, 가국동구(家國同構)의 사회 구조와 서로 호응한다." 저우페이저우는 중국 가정에서 중국 사회 이론의 근간을 적극적으로 발굴하며, 점점 심해지는 개인화 추세에 반대한다. 그는 또한 현대 국가 체계의 nation-state 논리가 아닌, 중국의 '가국일체' 이론을 이론적으로 해석하려 시도한다. 이를 요약하면, 저우페이저우는 사회학 이론을 선진 유교 사회 사상까지 거슬러 올라가 추적하면서 중국 본토의 사회학 이론을 수립하여, 중국식 현대화에 신뢰할 만한 이론적 대안을 제공하는 것을 목표로 한다.

저우페이저우의 학문적 노력이 중국 사회학의 본토화를 추진하는 데 초점을 맞추었다면, 한상진은 유교 사상의 세계 사회학 이론에서의 위치를 설명하는 데 주력했다. 한상진은 유학이 현대성과 제2의 현대성을 반성하는 데 이론적 자원을 제공할 수 있다고 본다. 그는 유교 사상에서 파생된 "천하위공(天下爲公, all things under the heaven belong to the public)" 이념이 세계시민적 공공성(Cosmopolitan Publicness)을 포함하고 있다고 지적한다. "천하위공"을 기반으로 전 지구적 위험 공동체(global risk community)를 구축할 수 있다고 본다. "천하위공"은 전 지구적 일체성의 이념을 포함하며, 적극적이고 건설적인 세계시민적 도덕 지향을 내포하고 있다. 한상진은 신유교 사상에서 세계시민사회(global civil society)의 공공성을 확립할 수 있는 사상적 자원을 추출한 것이다. 특히 유교 사상에 내포된 생존 지향, 민의 지향, 생태 지향(survival-oriented, deliberative, and ecological)에 주목했다. 또한 한상진은 세계시민주의로서의 성찰적 유교(Reflexive Confucianism)가 국가 중심이 아니라 자발적 단체, 이웃, 교회 등 세계시민적 주체(cosmopolitan agency)에 의존한다고 본다. 이는 동아시아의 압축적 근대화 과정에서 나타난 국가 중심의 정치경제 전제 체제를 극복하는 데 도움이 된다고 본다. 이를 종합하면, 한상진은 세계시민적 사회학과 성찰적 현대성의 관점에서, 유학과 사회학의 관련성에 대해 통찰력 있는 탐구를 수행했으며, 인류가 제2의 현대성으로 나아가는 데 이론적 기여를 했다.

3.2 유학사회학(Confucian Sociology): my review

현대 세계에서 전통 유학의 제도화된 권력(왕권, 부권, 가장권, 신사권)을 회복하는 것은 기본적으로 불가능하다. 계몽운동 이래의 사회운동과 사상혁명으로 인해 전통적 가치관이 무너졌고, 민주, 자유, 평등의 새로운 관념이 이미 깊이 뿌리내렸다. 유학이 전통적인 제도화된 권력에서 이탈되는 것은 대세이며, 유학을 다시 정치화하기는 어렵다. 하지만 유학의 지식화는 가능하다. 철학적 사변 외에도, 우리는 사회과학의 관점에서 이론적 연구와 경험적 연구를 유학과 결합할 수 있다. 이를 통해 유학의 사회과학화 전환을 실현하고, 이른바 유학사회학 또는 사회과학적 유학을 수립할 수 있다.

(1) 문명연구와 교양교육

유학은 동아시아(주로 중국) 문명에 관한 전체적 서사로, 기독교, 불교, 이슬람교 등과 마찬가지로 하나의 완전한 가치관 체계를 응축하고 있으며, 동아시아인(주로 중국인)의 삶과 죽음의 의미 문제를 조망한다. 뒤르켐적 관점에서 말하자면, 문명은 '사회적인 것'의 가장 본질적인 의미이다. 사회학적 방식으로 유학을 재해석하는 것은 현대 동아시아인들이 사회학적 방식으로 자신이 속한 사회에 대해 자각적인 인식을 갖게 하고, 또한 세계의 다른 문명의 사람들이 동아시아인의 생활 방식을 이해하게 함으로써 서로 다른 문명 간의 화해와 소통을 촉진하기 위해서다. 문명 전통의 차이로 인해 서로 다른 문명은 현대적 전환의 경로가 다소 상이하다. 특히 비서구 국가들이 서구식 현대성의 위기에 빠지지 않도록 경계해야 한다. 비서구 국가의 문명 전통과 그 현대화를 연구하는 것은 현대화의 다른 가능성을 탐색하는 것이기도 하다.

유학과 사회학의 관련성을 해석하여 유학 사회학에 기반한 교양교육을 개발하는 것이 나의 교육과 연구 작업의 중요한 일부다. 유학만 다룬다면 복고적이고 보수적인 느낌을 줄 수 있다. 하지만 사회학과 결합하여 유교를 논하면, 유학은 현대 사회 속에서 살아있게 된다. 사회학 또한 중국의 역사와 문화에 뿌리를 내려 학문적 설명력을 강화할 수 있게 된다. 이를 통해 유학과 사회학 모두 새로운 생명과 발전을 얻을 수 있다. 발표자는 유학 사회학에 기반한 교양교육을 통해 박학하고 개방적인 현대인을 양성하고, 중국을 비롯한 동아시아 사회가 더욱 건강한 현대적 전환을 이루도록 노력하고자 한다. 유학을 기반으로 하는 동아시아 문명은 아마도 새로운 현대 사회 이론을 응축해낼 수 있을 것이며, 서구와는 다른 새로운 현대화의 길을 개척할 수 있을 것이다.

(2) 성찰적 사회학

부르디외는 성찰적 사회학, 즉 사회학의 사회학을 제안했다. 성찰적 사회학의

초점은 사실이 무엇인가에 있지 않고, 사실이 어떻게 생산되는지, 그리고 그 사실이 합리적인지 등의 성찰적 주제에 더 관심을 둔다. 유학은 현대성을 성찰하는 데 이론적 자원을 제공한다. 먼저, 우리는 세계의 여러 문명이 각기 다른 방식으로 인간의 삶과 죽음을 조망한다는 것을 인정해야 한다. 그러나 서로 다른 문명들 모두 고귀한 가치 이념을 추구하고 있다. 아마도 어떤 문명도 인류가 민주, 자유, 평등, 박애 등의 고귀한 이상을 추구하는 것을 반대하지 않을 것이다. 이는 현대성이 주창하는 가치관이기도 하다. 하지만 신자유주의적 현대화는 민주, 자유, 평등, 박애 등의 가치 이념을 왜곡할 수 있다. 민주주의는 민주주의의 폭정으로 변할 수 있고, 자유는 극단적인 개성 표현으로 변할 수 있으며, 평등은 극단적 포퓰리즘으로 변할 수 있고, 박애는 위선적인 이기주의로 변할 수 있다.

유학은 이러한 인류 공통의 고귀한 가치 이념으로 가는 또 다른 길을 제시한다. 이 길은 역설적으로 보이지만 실제로는 같은 목적지에 도달한다. 유교식 민주주의는 현인이 주도하는 민주주의(즉, 이른바 현능정치)로, 민주주의의 폭정을 제어한다. 유교식 자유는 관계와 관계 윤리의 제약 속에서 자유를 찾는다. 유교식 평등은 합리적인 불평등을 인정한 후, 관계 윤리의 상호 배려 속에서 연결과 평등을 실현한다. 유교식 박애는 친소와 내외의 구별을 인정하는 박애로, 이를 확장하면 "민포물여(民胞物與, 민생과 만물이 하나)"까지 이를 수 있다. 환언하면 유교가 제시하는 현대성 방안은 다음과 같다. 비민주적인 것 속에서 민주를 추구하고, 부자유 속에서 자유를 추구하며, 불평등 속에서 평등을 추구하고, 비박애적인 것 속에서 박애를 추구한다. 이러한 변증법적인 이론은 신자유주의적 현대화 방안과 대화할 수 있는 성찰적 사회학의 이론적 자원이 될 수 있을 것이다.

(3) 관계사회학

건강한 사회는 다양하고 건강한 관계 없이는 존재할 수 없다. 인간은 태어나면서부터 부모와의 관계를 맺고, 인생 경험이 쌓여가면서 형제, 부부, 친구, 학우, 동료, 전우, 동향인 등 다양한 이들과 관계를 맺게 된다. 각기 다른 관계에는 그에 맞는 관계 윤리가 있어 특별한 식별과 처리가 필요하다. 특히 친밀한 관계에는 더 많은 감정을 쏟아 부어야 한다. 사람들 간의 상호작용에서 해당 관계 윤리를 위반하면 관계가 경직되고 문제를 해결하기 어려워진다. 예를 들어, 아버지가 자애롭지 않고 자식이 효도하지 않으면 부자 관계가 변질된다. 유교에서 파생된 관계사회학은 주로 다양한 관계와 관계 윤리의 확립이 건강한 사회 창조에 어떤 의미를 갖는지 탐구한다. 만약 사람들 사이의 소통이 오직 정치적 권력과 경제적 이익을 통해서만 이루어진다면, 관계는 정치경제적 전제 체제에 빠져 하버마스가 말한 의사소통적 합리성을 달성할 수 없게 될 것이다.

관계사회학의 관점에서, 유교가 응축하는 관계와 관계 윤리를 수행하는 도덕 원칙은 인의(仁義) 정신이다. '인(仁)'은 사랑을 의미한다. 가까운 일체의 친족(예: 부모자식)에서 시작해 차등 있는 사랑으로 확장되어 "천하를 인(仁)하게 한다"에

이른다. 유교는 인을 측은지심으로 보며, 이는 인간 본성의 자연스러운 반응으로 행동의 시발점으로서의 의미를 갖는다. '의(義)'는 마땅함을 의미한다. 사랑을 적절하게, 과하지도 부족하지도 않게 하는 것이다. 의로움에 마땅한 것은 반드시 행하고, 의롭지 않은 것은 절대 하지 않는다. 유교는 의를 수오지심으로 보며, 이는 인에 대한 절제로 행동의 규범으로서의 의미를 갖는다. 모든 관계 윤리는 인과 의의 조합이다. 사람 사이의 가장 이상적인 상태는 '인지의진(仁至義盡, 인과 의를 다하는 것)'이다. 이를테면 자식이 아버지에 대해 인지의진하는 것이 바로 효다. 일상적 실천에서 '인'은 또한 '인심상유(人心相喻)', 즉 서로의 마음이 통하여 사람들 사이에 적절한 소통 상태를 형성하는 것을 의미한다. 여기서 우리는 '인'과 '의사소통적 합리성' 사이에 같은 맥락의 묘미가 있음을 볼 수 있다.

유교의 관계사회학에는 '수제치평(修齊治平: 修身, 齊家, 治國, 平天下)'의 도가 있다. 천지만물과 모든 종류의 관계는 유교의 관계 질서 안에 포함될 수 있으며, 각각 그에 맞는 관계 윤리가 있어 최종적으로 '차서격국(差序格局)'을 형성한다. 자신에서 시작해 가족, 친구, 이웃, 지역사회, 회사, 그리고 국가에 이르기까지, 다양한 관계 상황은 개인 행위자가 어떻게 '인지의진'(仁至義盡)을 실천할 수 있는지를 시험한다. 현대 사회에서 다양한 관계를 어떻게 적절히 맺을 것인지, 옛 관계를 어떻게 조정할 것인지, 새로운 관계를 어떻게 규범화할 것인지는 모두 새롭게 연구하고 사고해야 할 문제다. 중국 사회에서 '인지의진'은 여전히 중국인들이 관계를 맺는 데 있어 숭고한 도덕적 기준으로 작동한다.

주목할 만한 것은 동아시아의 청년들이 신자유주의적 개인주의 가치관을 받아들인 후, 동아시아 국가들에 광범위하게 존재하는 관계 중심 사회에 적응하는 데 어려움을 겪고 있으며, 이로 인해 대인 관계에서 많은 문제가 발생하고 있다는 점이다. 유학에 기반한 관계사회학의 지식은 미시적 차원에서 사람들이 대인 관계를 처리하는 데 도움을 줄 수 있으며, 이를 통해 건강한 사회를 창조하는 데 기여할 수 있다.

(4) 실천사회학

실천사회학은 분과 학문의 경계를 넘어 실천에 대한 종합적인 사회학 연구를 수행하며, 특히 실천적 아비투스(habitus)와 전략에 대한 연구에 중점을 둔다. 유학은 매우 강한 실천성을 지니고 있어 실천사회학의 지식 원천이 될 수 있다. 이는 주로 다음과 같은 측면에서 나타난다. 첫째, "수신이례(修身以禮)"이다. 유교는 학습자들에게 청소하거나, 보고 듣고 말하고 행동하는 등의 사소한 일에서 수신 실천을 요구한다. 예에 따라 행동하고 진퇴를 적절히 하는 것, 즉 이른바 "비예물시, 비예물청, 비예물언, 비예물동(非禮勿視, 非禮勿聽, 非禮勿言, 非禮勿動: 예가 아니면 보지 말고, 듣지 말고, 말하지 말고, 행동하지 말라)"을 실천하도록 한다. 건강한 인격의 형성은 단순히 지식의 주입만으로는 불가능하며, 보고 듣고 말하고 행동하는 차원에서의 실천과 훈련이 필요하다.

둘째, "이신재도(以身載道)"이다. 모든 도의, 가치 또는 관계 윤리의 실현은 실천의 담당자를 필요로 한다. 유교는 군자가 "이신재도"해야 한다고 강조한다. "이신재도"는 실천의 정당성, 용기, 그리고 경로를 포함한다. 오직 "선각자"가 올바른 방향으로 실천해야만 고귀한 이상을 실현할 수 있다. 다시 말해, 도의 흥망성쇠는 사람의 실천에 달려 있다. 이는 "인능홍도(人能弘道, 사람이 도를 넓힐 수 있다)"라는 말과 같은 맥락이다. 제도 규칙과 개인 실천의 관계에서 볼 때, "도법불족이자행(徒法不足以自行, 법만으로는 스스로 시행되기에 부족하다)"이다. 행위자의 "이신재도"가 없다면, "제도와 규칙은 있지만 책임질 사람은 없는" 역설적인 현상이 쉽게 나타날 수 있다. 행위자 또한 정해진 규칙이 자동으로 준수될 것을 당연시해서는 안 된다. 만약 그렇게 되면 정치적으로 큰 오류가 발생할 수 있다.

셋째, "현능정치(賢能政治)"다. 유교의 현능정치는 실천사회학의 취지를 포함한다. 유교의 관점에서, 어떤 단체나 조직에서든 지도자의 실천이 사업의 성패를 좌우한다. 마찬가지로, "준걸재위(俊傑在位)"해야만 단체나 조직의 원활한 운영과 사업의 성공을 보장할 수 있다. 현명한 군자는 시세를 파악하고 관례를 깨뜨려 선구적인 행동을 할 수 있으며, 제도/구조 결정론에 반하는 실천을 할 수 있다. 그러나 현명한 군자가 특정 제도와 구조에 갇혀 있다면, "만마제암구가애(萬馬齊暗究可哀)"의 상황이 발생할 수 있다. 현재, 다양한 사회 문제가 빈번히 발생하여 지식인들의 직접적인 참여와 지도가 필요한 시기에, 많은 지식인들이 갈수록 논문 발표에 구속되어 "상아탑"에서 벗어나지 못하고 실제적인 행동으로 건강한 사회를 건설하지 못하고 있다. 지식인들이 현대 학술 체제에 갇혀 있는 모습이 아닐까 싶다.

요약하자면, 유교의 실천사회학은 개인이 인의(仁義)의 군자가 되기를 요구하며, 개인의 수양과 주변과의 관계에서 시작하여 건강하고 아름다운 사회를 건설하기 위해 노력하고, 점진적으로 "수제치평(修齊治平)"의 위대한 비전을 실현하도록 한다.

이 절의 끝에서 반드시 언급해야 할 것은, 지식 축적의 관점에서 유학이 지식사회학, 역사사회학, 사회사상사, 사회이론 등의 영역에서 매우 큰 지적 기여를 했다는 것이다. 그러나 여기서는 유교학이 교양 교육, 성찰적 사회학, 관계사회학, 실천사회학으로서 갖는 의미에 중점을 두고 논의했다. 이는 주로 이러한 측면들이 본 글에서 탐구하고자 하는 거버넌스(자기 수양과 사회 거버넌스 포함)란 주제와 더 밀접하게 관련되어 있기 때문이다.

4. 사례 연구

다음은 일본과 중국의 세 가지 선치(善治) 사례를 소개하고, 유학 사회학의 관점에서 그 안에 내포된 선치 이념과 실천 경로를 분석하겠다. 이 세 가지 사례는 (1) 일본 기층 자치에서 흔히 볼 수 있는 '회람판'제도. (2) 일본 교외와 농촌에서 흔히 볼 수 있는 농업 자원봉사자 제도. (3) 중국에서 최근 점차 부상하고 있는 지역사회 공익 조직. 이 세 가지 사례는 필자가 2021년부터 2024년까지 일본과 중국 등지에서 수행한 현지 조사에서 얻은 것이다.

4.1 일본의 '회람판' 제도

2021년부터 2022년까지 발표자는 일본 동북부의 이와테현, 서남부의 구마모토현, 그리고 도쿄 동쪽 교외의 지바현에서 농촌조사를 실시했으며, 세 곳 모두에서 '회람판' 제도를 발견했다. 소위 '회람판'이란 순회 열람하는 판으로, 지방 자치기관, 자치회 또는 기타 지역사회 조직의 공지사항이 부착되어 있다. 자치회는 약 10가구를 하나의 주민 소그룹으로 구성하며, 이를 이웃조직(鄰組) 또는 이웃보호반(鄰保班)이라고 부른다. '회람판'은 주민 소그룹 내에서 순회 전달되어 정보를 공유한다. 이전 가구에서 '회람판'의 정보를 열람한 후 서명하거나 도장을 찍고, 그 다음 가구로 전달하여 열람하도록 되어있다.

'회람판'은 자치회의 거버넌스 수단이다. 자치회는 일본의 기층사회 곳곳에 있으며, 자치회에 가입한 회원들은 매년 몇 천 엔의 회비를 자치회에 납부하고, 이를 통해 자치회가 주최하는 다양한 단체 활동에 참여할 자격을 얻는다. 자치회는 회장, 부회장, 사무국장 등의 직무담당자를 선출하여 자치회의 일상적인 운영을 담당하게 한다. 자치회는 지방 자치단체와 정기적인 연락 체계를 가지고 있어, 사회 상황과 주민들의 의견을 상부에 전달할 수 있다. 그러나 자치회의 가장 중요한 기능은 지역사회의 자치를 유지하는 것이다.

자치회를 통해 주민 소그룹(이웃조직 또는 이웃보호반) 방식으로 주민들을 조직한 것은 일본이 2차 대전 기간 동안 전시체제의 일부로 기층 동원과 사회통제를 위해 사용한 수단이었다. 소그룹 단위로 주민들을 조직하고 동원하는 방식은 조직 형태 면에서 중국 고대의 보갑제와 유사하다. 소그룹 내 주민들은 서로 돕는 동시에 서로를 감독한다. '회람판'은 이러한 주민 소그룹의 조직 방식으로부터 탄생했다. 제국의 통제와 전쟁 동원 요소가 사라진 후, 자치회 산하의 주민 소그룹과 '회람판'은 지역사회 주민들이 교류하는 중요한 메커니즘이 되었다.

'회람판'은 몇 가지 중요한 문제를 해결했다. 첫째, 이메일이나 스마트폰 대신 '회람판'을 사용하여 정보를 전달함으로써 전자기기 사용에 익숙하지 않은 일부 고령자들의 현실적 조건에 부합했기에, 어느 정도 '디지털 격차'를 메웠다. 둘째, '회람판'의 전달은 지역 주민들이 집 밖으로 나와 다른 지역 주민들과 대면

교류를 하도록 강제함으로써, 지역 주민들의 사회적 욕구를 충족시켰다. 셋째, '고독사'에 대한 대응이다. 일본의 많은 고령자가 독거하고 있으며, 최근 몇 년간 매년 수만 명의 일본인이 '고독사'하여 일본의 큰 사회문제가 되고 있다. '회람판'의 전달은 고령자들의 '고독사'를 예방하는 데 기여하고 있다. 요약하면, '회람판' 제도는 과도한 개인화를 억제하고 지역사회 공동체 건설을 증진시키는 중요한 메커니즘이다. '회람판' 제도는 개인이 자신의 틀에서 벗어나 이웃과 타인에 관심을 갖고, 지역사회의 공공성 구축에 관심을 갖도록 촉진함으로써 '인(仁)'의 정신을 구현한다.

4.2 일본의 농업 자원봉사자 제도

농업 자원봉사자 제도는 일본의 거의 모든 행정 단위에서 시행되고 있다. 이 제도는 지방 자치단체의 관련 부서가 운영하거나 지방 자치단체가 제3자 기관에 위탁하여 운영하며, 노동력이 필요한 농가(농장)를 농업 자원봉사 활동에 참여하고자 하는 시민들과 연결해 준다. 농업 자원봉사자들은 도시로부터 교외나 농촌 지역으로 와서 농업 자원봉사에 참여하며, 대부분 일주일에 1-2일 정도 일한다. 농업 자원봉사자들은 대부분 퇴직한 노인들이며, 일부는 농업에 관심 있는 중장년층이다. 농업 자원봉사는 무보수이지만, 농가에서는 일반적으로 농업 자원봉사자들에게 감사의 표시로 소량의 제철 특산물이나 쌀을 선물하곤 한다. 이 선물의 가치는 해당 지역의 최저 시급 기준보다 훨씬 낮다.

일본의 농업 자원봉사자 제도는 1990년대에 산업화, 도시화, 고령화라는 구조적 배경 속에서 탄생했다. 이 제도는 한편으로는 농업 노동력 부족 문제를 완화하는 데 도움이 되고, 다른 한편으로는 시민들의 자연 친화, 농업 체험, 사회적 연결 재건에 대한 정신적 요구를 충족시키는 데 도움이 된다. 특히 퇴직한 고령자에게, 이 제도를 통해 농촌에서 여가 노동을 하고, 농업 기술을 배우며, 퇴직 후 새로운 친구를 사귀어 사회적, 정신적 욕구를 충족시킬 수 있다. 쇼와 시대의 종신 고용제 하에서 많은 일본인들은 퇴직할 때까지 한 회사나 기관에서 일했기 때문에, 일단 집약적 집단생활에서 벗어나면 적응하기 어려울 수 있다. 남성이 퇴직 후 하루 종일 집에 있으면 "남자는 밖에서, 여자는 안에서"라는 가정생활 패턴에 충격을 가해 부부 관계에 긴장을 초래할 수 있다. 농업 자원봉사자 제도는 퇴직한 노인들에게 적절한 거처를 제공한다. 어떤 농업 자원봉사자는 한 농장에서 20년 동안 자원봉사 활동을 해왔다. 지바현 야치요시의 스즈키농원(가명)에서 인상적인 83세의 퇴직 노인을 만났는데, 그는 이미 20년 동안 자원봉사를 해왔다. 그는 이렇게 말한다. "여기에는 십여 명의 자원봉사자가 있고, 우리는 서로 잘 알고 지내며 관계도 좋습니다. 우리는 마치 한 그룹의 친구 같습니다. 여기서 자원봉사를

하는 것이 즐겁고, 이곳은 퇴직자들에게 좋습니다. 의미 있는 일을 할 수 있고, 퇴직 후에 거처(일본어로 '이바쇼')도 있습니다." 농업 자원봉사자 제도는 국가 권력이 강제적으로 배정한 것도 아니고, 경제적 이익에 의해 추동되는 것도 아니다. 이는 사회의 자발적 조직의 산물이다. 이 제도는 개인이 고독한 자아에서 벗어나 사회적 관계를 재건하고 새로운 형태의 공동체를 구축하는 데 도움이 된다.

4.3 중국의 사구 공익조직

중국 경제사회 발전과 국민 교육 수준, 소득 수준 향상에 따라 최근 10여 년간 중국에서는 사회조직 수가 2010년 44.6만 개에서 2020년 89.4만 개로 급증했다. 취미 단체, 지연 조직, 지역사회 공익조직 등이 점차 증가하고 있으며, 이들은 국가와 시장이 미치기 어려운 사회영역에서 점점 더 중요한 역할을 하고 있다. 다양한 비공유제 경제조직과 사회조직의 활발한 발전에 대응하기 위해, 2016년 9월 중국 공산당은 각 지역의 현급 이상 당위원회에 '비공유제 경제조직 및 사회조직 업무위원회(非公有制經濟組織和社會組織工作委員會)'(줄임말로   "양신"공위)를 설립하여 새로운 경제조직과 새로운 사회조직을 규범화하고 관리하도록 했다. 기존의 공유제 사회조직에 비해, 이러한 비공유제 사회조직들은 새로운 사회 조직으로 불린다.

발표자가 사례로 삼은 한탕교육촉진회(翰堂敎育促進會)가 이러한 새로운 사회 조직의 한 예가 될 수 있다. 이는 농촌 교육 발전을 촉진하는 township-level 수준의 지역사회 공익조직이다. 한탕 교육촉진회는 장시성(江西省) 상가오현(上高縣) 한탕진(翰堂鎭) 출신의 농촌교육 공익사업에 뜻을 둔 청년들(90년대생과 00년대생 위주)이 발족시켰다. 한탕 교육촉진회는 2022년부터 준비를 시작하여 2023년에 공식 등록되었으며, 2024년 8월 기준으로 총 95명의 회원이 있다. 이 중 70%는 이미 졸업한 대학생이고, 30%는 재학 중인 대학생이다. 그들은 중국 농촌교육 발전이 지체되고 있다는 점에 주목했다. 교육 자원의 도시-농촌 격차가 점점 커지고 있기에 농촌의 우수한 교사와 학생들이 도시로 유입되어 일부 빈곤 학생들이 정상적인 학습과 생활을 하지 못하게 되며 농촌 아이들이 교육을 통해 상향 이동하기가 점점 더 어려워진다는 것이다. 따라서 이들은 자신들의 고향부터 시작해서 농촌교육 발전을 위해 할 수 있는 범위 내에서 기여하고자 했다.

한탕 교육촉진회는 이사회를 심의 및 의사결정 기구로 두고, 내부에 사무국, 홍보부, 장학부, 학업지원부, 활동부, 조사연구부 등을 설치했다. 이들은 협회의 로고를 디자인하고, 위챗 공식 계정과 위챗 그룹을 홍보 플랫폼으로 만들었으며, 1-2개월마다 한 번씩 온라인 회의를 개최한다. 한탕 교육촉진회는 수입이 있는 회원들에게 매일 1위안씩 기부하도록 호소하며, 이를 모아 농촌교육 공익 활동에

사용한다. 2023년에는 약 4만 위안의 공익 자금을 모아 한탕진의 대학생, 중학생, 초등학생 총 47명에게 장학금을 지급했다. 2024년 6월에는 대학입시 지원서 작성을 위한 공익 자문단을 설립하여, 교육 수준이 낮은 농촌 학부모와 학생들에게 무료 자문 서비스를 제공했다. 2024년 8월에는 일주일간의 공익 여름방학 교실을 조직했다. 베이징대, 난징대, 중국인민대, 도쿄대, 와세다대 등에서 온 15명의 대학생(일본인 대학생 4명 포함)을 초청하여 공익적인 교육 지원 활동을 진행하며 농촌 학생들의 시야를 넓혔다. 중서부 농촌 학생들은 명문대 학생들과 교류할 기회가 적은 편이어서, 농촌의 학부모와 학생들은 양질의 교육을 갈망하고 있다. 공익 여름방학 교실은 학부모와 학생들로부터 환영을 받아 100명 이상의 초·중등학생이 참가 신청했고, 매일 학생들의 학부모들이 자발적으로 공익 교육 지원을 하는 대학생들에게 음식이나 음료를 제공하며 감사의 뜻을 표했다.

한탕 교육촉진회의 회장은 2020년 베이징대에서 사회학 박사 학위를 받고 현재 중국 난징의 한 대학에서 사회학 교육과 연구 업무를 하고 있다. 한탕 교육촉진회는 그의 사회학 실험으로, 주요 목표는 농촌 사회의 전환을 관찰하고 농촌 사회 건설에 참여하는 것이다. 연구 방법의 관점에서 볼 때, 직접 실천하는 실험법이 현장조사 방법보다 현실 세계의 작동 논리를 더 잘 파악할 수 있다. 사회적 효과 측면에서 그는 대학의 사회과학 연구자들이 캠퍼스를 벗어나 사회학 실험을 수행하여 실천을 통해 새로운 발전 가능성을 탐구하고, 이를 통해 긍정적인 공적 영향력을 생산하여 국민의 복지를 향상시키기를 희망한다. 구체적으로, 그가 한탕 교육촉진회를 설립한 목표는 다음 세 가지다. 첫째, 교육 현황 개선. 실질적인 조치를 통해 고향의 교육 현황을 개선하고 더 많은 인재를 양성한다. 둘째, 인재 교류 촉진. 한탕 교육촉진회라는 공익 조직 네트워크를 통해 서로 교류하고 돕고 더 큰 공익의 힘을 발휘한다. 셋째, 사회 분위기 전환. 이 공익 조직의 역량을 통해 고향의 사회 분위기를 변화시켜, 점점 더 많은 고향 사람들이 공공 정신과 공익 정신을 갖게 하고 냉담함과 이기적인 상태에 빠지지 않도록 한다.

5. 토론과 소결

이 세 가지 사례를 바탕으로, 우리는 유학사회학의 관점에서 오늘날 선치(善治)의 함의를 분석할 수 있다.

첫째, 선치는 개인주의적 생활 방식보다 사회단체의 생활 방식으로 이어져야 한다. 서로 다른 사회단체 내부의 교류 밀도는 다르지만, 유학 사회학은 사람들이 편협한 개인주의에서 벗어나고, 이기적인 자아 상태에서 벗어나도록 장려한다. 또한 어떤 '연(緣)'(예: 혈연, 지연, 직업, 취미 등)을 기반으로 사회단체를 형성하고, 적절한 소통과 교류를 통해 공동체의 정체성을 만들어내도록 제창한다. 사회단체나 사회조직을 기반으로 형성된 선치는 국가 권력의 강제적 지배에 의존하지 않으며,

경제적 이익에 의존하지도 않는다. 대신 세계시민주의(cosmopolitanism)적 의미에서 사회 자체의 조직력에 의존한다.

둘째, 선치는 유교의 인의(仁義) 정신을 구현해야 한다. 인(仁)의 관점에서 보면, 한 사람은 가까운 곳에서 먼 곳으로 자신 이외의 사람과 사물의 생존 상태에 관심을 가져야 하며, 개인의 권리를 과도하게 수호하지 않아야 한다. 인은 타인에 대해 책임을 지는 박애 정신을 구현한다. 의(義)의 관점에서 보면, 한 사람은 인간으로서의 도덕적 기준과 책임감을 굳건히 지켜야 하며, 규칙이 허용한 범위 내에 있더라도 타인의 이익을 침해해서는 안 되며, 더욱이 정당한 절차를 통해 의도적으로 합리적인 규칙을 만들어 합법적 착취를 해서도 안 된다. 의는 자신에 대해 책임지는 자율 정신을 구현한다. 인자(仁者)는 개인의 권리를 행동 원칙으로 삼지 않고, 정서와 이치에 맞는 관계를 구축하는 것을 행동 원칙으로 삼는다. 의자(義者)는 합리적 이익 추구를 행동 원칙으로 삼지 않고, 도덕적 자율을 행동 원칙으로 삼는다. 유교의 인의 정신을 기반으로 한 공공성은 개인의 권리와 합리적 이익 추구를 기반으로 한 공공성과 다르다. 유학의 공공성은 궁극적으로 공동체 건설을 지향하는 반면, 신자유주의적 공공성은 궁극적으로 개인 보호를 지향하며, 광범위하게 연결되어 있지만 고독감을 더욱 느끼는 개인들을 만들어내고, 심지어 "만인 대 만인의 적"인 "리바이어던"을 만들어낸다.

셋째, 선치는 유교적 공공 정신을 가진 현인(賢人)들에 의해 유지되어야 한다. 자유, 민주, 평등의 제도적 규칙은 알아서 작동되는 것이 아니라 유교적 공공성을 지닌 지식인이나 사회 활동가에 의해 지도되고 조절되어야 한다. 선치의 단체는 신자유주의적 평등 구도가 아니라, 유교적 현인을 지도자로 하는 차등적 질서 구도다. 선치의 단체는 민주, 자유, 평등을 존중해야 하지만 이를 강요해서는 안 되며, 특히 민주, 자유, 평등을 사익 추구의 도구로 삼아서는 안 된다. 즉, 선치의 조직 원칙은 유교의 인의 정신과 유교적 공공성 원칙이며, 신자유주의 원칙이 아니다. 발표자는 이를 "제도적 규칙 속에 유교 정신을 담다(Confucianization of institutional rules)"로 요약한다. 유교적 현인은 바로 "제도적 규칙 속에 유교 정신을 담는" 실천의 주체인 것이다.

요약하자면, 유학사회학적 의미에서의 선치는 국가 중심주의, 시장 중심주의, 과도한 개인주의에 반대하며, '사회'주의, 공동체주의, 세계시민주의(cosmopolitanism)를 주장한다. 이처럼 유학 사회학에서 출발하여 신자유주의적 공공성이 아닌 유교적 공공성을 양성할 수 있다. 유학 사회학은 동아시아 사회가 현대성에 대한 반성을 위해 제공할 수 있는 사상적 자원이 될 수 있다. 이는 현대인이 제1의 현대성을 초월하여 더욱 건강하고 성숙한 제2의 현대성으로 나아가는 데 도움을 줄 수 있다.