

## **Abstract of Doctoral Thesis**

# **Title: Japanese Confucianism during the 17th-18th centuries and Koshō-Gaku in Ming and Qing – Formation of A “Synchronous” East Asian Basic Knowledge System**

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This research aims to reconsider the formation process and characteristics of Japanese Confucianism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as its status in East Asian intellectual history, from the perspective of its “synchronous” development with Philology in Ming and Qing dynasties. Further, the existence of a “synchronous” East Asian basic knowledge system would be revealed.

Previous researches on intellectual history mainly focused on whether there is so-called “modern-thinking” innate to Japanese ideology. The discussions tended to be conducted in a “one-state-history” structure. To overcome the limitations of “one-state-history”, some scholars proposed to re-discuss the matters from an East-Asia perspective. The proposed perspective, nonetheless, was contested for the peculiarities of Japanese society. This research would comprehensively discuss the intellectual history of Ming and Qing dynasties and the intellectual history of Japan, taking into considerations the “synchronous” development of modern East Asia. It would facilitate a renewed understanding of the intellectual structure of Japanese Confucianism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The thesis is composed of the five chapters in main body, along with the introduction and conclusion. Chapter One discusses the changing dynamics of Ri-Gaku (理学) and Shin-Gaku (心学) upon the Daliyi(大禮議) event in Ming dynasty, as well as the consequent occurrences of the two new ideological trends, Fuko (復古) and Koshō (考証). A common subject underlying the two new ideological trends is the criticisms of Neo-Confucianism and the pursuits of classicism. Japanese scholars gradually accepted such issue-awareness, over the interactions of books and knowledge between China and Japan during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; which had contributed to the development of Japanese Confucianism, particularly the classicism ideologies. It also caused the “empiricism” character of Japanese Confucianism.

Chapter Two thoroughly evaluates the formation process of the issue-awareness and knowledge-system of Kogi-Gaku (古義学), based on comparative analysis of the book-notes made by Jinsai (仁齋), Tōgai (東涯), Rangū (蘭嶠). It reveals how Confucian classics in Ming dynasty has been absorbed and developed by Kogi-Gaku.

Chapter Three observes the activities conducted in Gakujuku (学塾), and discusses how Gakujuku, as an “intellectual space”, has impacted the personal intellectual development of scholars, the coming into being of ideological schools, the then social and cultural lives.

Chapter Four re-evaluates the issue-awareness and theological construct of Sorai-Gaku, which has attracted the most focus within early modern Japanese intellectual history, based in the intellectual and cultural contexts of early modern Japan as revealed in the above three chapters. The intellectual resonance between it and the ideological trends, Fuko and Koshō, in Ming dynasty, is to be revealed. Its implications for Japanese intellectual history and East Asian intellectual history can be relocated.

Chapter Five assesses the trends in the eighteenth-century academia from the perspective of Anti-Sorai. Although Anti-Sorai scholars at the time mostly criticized Sorai-gaku, it demonstrates, on the other hand, how Sorai-Gaku along with its endorsed Ming-dynasty theories, were learned and absorbed. It also provided as an intellectual base for the formation of Japanese Koshō-Gaku in the nineteenth century.

In sum, this research confirms the effectiveness of an East-Asia perspective, based on the evaluations regarding the issue-awareness, intellectual contexts, contents of Japanese Confucianism during the 17th-18th centuries and Koshō-Gaku in Ming and Qing. From the East-Asia perspective, Japanese Confucianism, although having its peculiarities, has not out-tracked the comprehensive intellectual history of East Asia. It responds, to a certain degree, against the methods and conclusions about re-constructing early modern Confucianism out of modern theories, as proposed since modern times by some researches of Japanese intellectual history.